Sermons of the Guardian of Devotion

VOLUME THREE

From informal talks by
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All Glories to the Divine Master and the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna Chaitanya

Chapter 1

The Question

yac chrotavyam atho japyam yat karttavyam nrbhih
prabho smarttavyam bhajaniyam va bruhi yad va viparyyayam
(Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.19.38)

King Pariksit asked: "We are exercising our senses in this plane but what will be most beneficial for us? We are receiving things from outside to meet the demand of our internal self, but what will be the best utility of our senses? Which things should we imbibe within ourselves for our best interest? We are always accepting something from the environment for the inner interest. Now how should we utilize our senses, the channel of our knowledge, that they may best help our inner interest?"

Pariksit Maharaj put his question to Sukadeva, and Sukadeva accepted saying,

variyan esa te prasnah krto loka-hitam nrpa
atmavit-samrnatah pumsam srotavyadisu yah parah
(Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.1.1)

"Yes it is a real question because two inherent signs of enquiry are here. Firstly, it is a general question: to find the solution is necessary for every one of us, and the answer to it will help us all. Secondly, one who already has proper knowledge of his own self will also accept this question to be most relevant. So, one sanction comes from the subjective realm, and another sanction is that it is good for the whole public. Such questions are real questions of universal interest, the solution of which will help every one of the enquirers, and not only with any partial or provincial solution, but with the absolute solution which will help solve the problem of the whole. It is *the* question that should be asked by anyone and everyone in this world. So, yes your question is bona fide. It will solve not only your problem but it will give the general solution to the whole problem of the entire world. This is *the* question to be solved, the only question. The general population do not have any perfect knowledge and so do not know what is what, therefore their enquiry may be faulty. One may therefore conclude that the public are always wrong. Since the masses are ignorant their questions may not be the proper ones. The demand of the majority may be erroneous. It cannot be admitted that *vox populi* is *vox dei."*

So it is necessary that there be intrinsic purity in the question. Therefore Sukadeva said that those who really understand their own position will also accept and give their sanction to this question as to what is our best benefit and how we can utilize our senses to draw knowledge from the environment so it will help us to the best advantage. It is passed by the subject-committee of the higher section who have faultless knowledge. They are infallible and they will give their sanction that this is a relevant question.

Sukadeva Goswami continued, "So, from two sides, from the upper and lower, they will accept your question as relevant. I am going to answer. You try to listen with perfect attention."

srotavyadini rajendra nrnam santi sahasrasah
apasyatam atma-tattvam grhesu grha-medhinam
(Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.1.2)

"Oh King, there is no end of ways by which we can utilize our senses. There are thousands of engagements by which all the senses are kept so busy that they find no time for leisure. They are mostly all engaged in serving those that do not know the true necessity of the real self. Those who do not know their own want and home are travelling in a foreign land endlessly working to try to satisfy their curiosity. There is no proper diagnosis but they are very busy in treatment: that is the situation to be found in the world. But self-realization, *atma-tattvam,* is such an important thing."

One of proper, normal understanding will therefore accept the necessity of revealed truth. Revealed truth does not rely on the majority consideration of the abnormal thinkers. *Srauta-pantha* means revealed truth, and that must come from the perfect realm: from God Himself. So here is established the indispensable necessity of the *Srauta-pantha,* the method of revelation. It must come from the perfect realm, from *sarvajna,* from the quarter of omniscience. We find that there are thousands of engagements in those that are unconscious of their own real interest. They are very busy, but very busy about nothing. What do we see if we look around?

nidraya hriyate naktam vyavayena ca va vayah diva
carthehaya rajan kutumba-bharanena va
(Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.1.3)

"At night we see two things; either sleep or playing with women. And the the day-time is spent either in search of money or by serving the relatives."

dehapatya-kalatradisv atma-sainyesv asatsv api tesam
pramatto nidhanam pasyann api na pasyati
(Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.1.4)

"In this world we tend to group with those we can exploit. We are surrounded by those who supply our sense enjoyment, our sense pleasure. We are fully engrossed in their interest and only use them for our own sense pleasure. We are so much engrossed in that sort of false duty that we have not the leisure to find out about our own death that is drawing near towards us. Seeing, but not seeing. It is a plain thing: everyone is going to the jaws of death with the mood, I see but still I can't see. I don't care to see and so I don't see. And this is the peculiar position I hold now. The danger, the final danger is approaching and I am asleep to that. I don't care to take notice of that greater duty.' What can be more strange than this?"

King Pariksit had only seven days more to live but Sukadeva Goswami told him: "You say that you have no time, only seven days. But that does not matter at all. Seven days is time enough, only the necessity is your particular attention for the solution. Only a moment is enough. There are so many trees, mountains and hills, they are living years and years, ages after ages, but to no benefit. So what is the necessity of such a long life? It is not a question of longevity or a question of time but what is necessary is the attention to one's own self: 'What am I and what is mine?'

With that sort of attitude our attention will be drawn to our own real interest. That is the factor, and not the question of time. There is enough time."

So seven days is enough, but the peculiar necessity is to find out how our attention can be drawn towards the reality. When that is discovered, then and there our real interest will be satisfied. And only by *sadhu-sanga,* the association of the higher, highly realized souls, is that possible."

khatvango nama rajarsir jnatveyattam ihayusah
muhurttat sarvvam utsrjya gatavan abhayam harim
(Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.1.13)

In history we find a precedent in Maharaj Khatvanga. He had only one moment left of his life but he so perfectly engaged himself that he gave himself for ever to the Lord. Without any reservation he surrendered to the feet of the Lord and he achieved the desired end. He achieved Hari. And who is Hari? *Abhayam:* when we get Him, then all apprehension, all fear and every undesirable thing will be vanquished for ever. That is the meaning of 'Hari.' 'Hari' means *saccidananda* eternal existence, perfect consciousness and also the fulfillment of life in ecstatic joy. Maharaj Khatvanga achieved all that within a moment!

sarvva-dharmman parityajya, mam ekam saranam vraja
(Bhagavad-gita 18.66)

So the problem is, how can we surrender, giving up our mundane attraction and our ignorance about our own interest? How can we jump into the Absolute Good - the ocean of our real interest? That is the problem and our questions should be of such a general character. Only there is this one question.

It is admitted by all that everyone wants the maximum happiness whether he be a stone, a tree, or any species up to the demigods, the *rsis* and *munis:* That is the only thing to be aspired for. Then how to attain it? What and who is the Lord? That is to be discussed and conceived. What is He? What am I? What is my end? How to reach the goal? What is the destination and how to reach the destination? *Sambandha, prayojana* and *abhidheya.* Under these three headings the Vedic Scriptures have discussed the whole problem. Who am I? Where am I? Then what is my best benefit—the goal—and how to attain it?

Divine relationship, practice and objective— *sambandha, abhidheya* and *prayojana—it is* all to be discussed under these three headings.

This is the general question. It is the question of everyone. It is not any partial thing and it has nothing to do with any sectarian or provincial interests, or anything of the kind. No such things can come against this campaign of the Gaudiya Math. Mahaprabhu began His campaign against Maya—misunderstanding—and, to the conscious, saner section, that is the very thing of general demand in the world.

The standard is not with the insane but it is with the saner section; they all will welcome the movement that was inaugurated by Swami Maharaj over the whole globe. And our Guru Maharaj

began that attempt to attack Maya, the illusory energy, and to devastate and smash it. This is *kirttana,* this is preaching.

This is *Harinama.* And Mahaprabhu came here with this: "Don't fly away, don't run away for fear of Maya, misunderstanding. Ultimately it is misunderstanding but you want reality, so why should you be afraid? Your basis is a real on - you are standing on fundamental reality so you should not be afraid and run to the jungle or to the cave. Even there, you will also always be afraid that Maya will enter. That is not being a bold soldier of the *sankirttana* party fearlessly wandering through the length and breadth of the world and chanting about Krsna, about truth. Truth! Take up that missionary work and Maya won't venture to approach you, for Maya is misunderstanding. By repeating your Krsna consciousness to others you will generate the truthful consciousness. With the help of Krsna consciousness you will be able to do away with everything infectious by spreading and distributing the disinfecting substances. That will be your duty. Be an agent of the disinfecting section who are throwing around the medicine to disinfect the infectious area. Be such an agent and thereby drive away infection from all around. If you go on in that way then infection cannot approach you. Because you are distributing disinfectant all around you, the infection cannot come to attack you, and at the same time others will also be saved."

There is only one necessity: the necessity to spread Krsna consciousness. And our object is *Prema. Prema* means to acquire more energetic tendency to spread higher and higher levels of Krsna consciousness. *'Dasa kari' vetana more deha prema-dhana:*

Prema will help us more intensely to engage in service—to serve, and to get the remuneration as *Prema.* The nature of *Prema* is that it will excite us more and more for service. It will move in a circular way: what we receive as remuneration will be the tendency to produce more service to the object of our reverence. That is *Prema. Prema* is not a separate thing from service, but it will help us more and more towards service. So it is continuous, it is dynamic. It is not that, "I have acquired *Prema,* now I am like a king and shall enjoy it—now there is no longer any necessity of service." Such a stage will never come, rather *Prema* will promote the speed and quality of the service. Love will actuate us more and more towards the service of the object of our love. So service will acquire *Prema,* and *Prema* will induce us to serve. That is our object of life.

Chapter 2

Finer than Matter

We find that certain Scriptures such as the *Upanisads* give mere Statements with no rhyme or reason; with no explanation or certification attached. This is because such knowledge is meant for the higher level where there is no possibility of any deception. whatever is said there is taken by the listeners as complete truth. There is no room for doubt because in that higher civilized plane there is no possibility of any deception. The *Upanisads* say: "This means so and so," and the natural response comes, "Yes, it is so." There is no *tarka* (reasoning), and no doubt or anything of the kind because the very plane itself is such that deception is unknown. So, in the case of the *Veda* and *Upanisads* we are cautioned: *acintyah khalu ye bhava na tams tarkena yojayet.* "Don't take your reasoning and doubt into that higher stage. It is unnecessary there where there is only plain speaking and fair dealing with no trouble from anyone wanting to deceive another. Deception and unfair dealings are unknown there." This is the level of the *Vedas* and *Upanisads* where rhyme and reason are unnecessary. But in a lower stage, the *Smrti* and *Puranas* come to give their advice in another mood. The *Puranas* are like friends, advising, "Do this and you will be benefitted." They give examples, "This person acted in such a way and received a good result; but this other did bad things and a bad result followed. So, my friend, please leam from this." Then, the *Sruti* comes to our help by showing us how to apply these trulths in our everyday life.

The *kavya* also approaches us and comes in a very sweet manner like an affectionate wife to advise: "Do this, it will be very good for you.." But the *Vedas* take another approach: *acintyah khalu ye bhava nastam tarkena yojayet.* This subject matter does not come within the jurisdiction of doubt, reasoning and so on. Don't drag all these worthy things into such a sphere."

In a lecture I gave an example to illustrate this. A mother gives a sweet to her son, she puts it in his hand but he says, "Oh, it may be poisoned! I must go to the laboratory and examine it." It is a deplorable thing and a very low type of civilization where such an attitude prevails. But in such a plane where affectionate and fair dealing is unknown, *tarka, vicara* and *yukti* (discrimination); doubt, examination and inspection are all present. But that is really a filthy life. There is *Krsna-smrti* and its opposite, *deha-smrti.*

deha-smrti nahi yara, samsara-kupa kahan tara, taha haite na cahe uddhara
(Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, Madhya 13.142)

One who is unconscious of his material body has no worldly material connection. We are conscious of our material body and therefore have come in connection with the atmosphere of the material world. If we are independent of this material body then we have no connection with the mortal world. This is the medium between the material world and the *atma,* the soul. The mental system makes the first connection, then comes this body consciousness.

After Sukadeva Goswami finished giving his *Bhagavata* discourse, in his conclusion he gave warning to the audience, especially Pariksit Maharaj, *tvam tu rajan marisyeti, pasu-buddhim imam jahi (Bhagavatam, 12.5.2).*

"Oh King, do not think you will die - give up this animal consciousness. Eliminate it fully from your thought and do not allow your attention to come down to any material conception. Remain in your own soul conception. Take your stand firmly there. Why do you allow yourself to come down to the conception of this matter: the world, your body and all these things? It is unnecessary. Don't allow your attention to come down to material consciousness, you are independent of that. Think of your soul, its higher achievement and prospect. Your transaction must be all upwards; stick to that. You, the soul, are independent of these. Free from matter you can live and move very happily. To think it not possible to stay without a body is animal consciousness, *pasu-buddhi.* What is this! Why do you allow yourself to come into this consciousness of matter which is mortal? Don't allow yourself to come down, to have experience of this material world. This is animal consciousness. You must kill it, butcher it! *Tvam turdjan marisyeti, pasu-buddhim imam jahi.* To think, T shall die is animal consciousness. Just kill it once and for all. At the same time try to soar up from soul to over-soul, and beyond to the Narayana conception and onwards to the Krsna conception. Try to live in the connection of Vraja and the Divine Damsels there who are all serving Krsna. Consider how they are so recklessly engaged in serving the sweet will of their Lord. Each one of them is always prepared and is the emblem of sacrifice."

In Hitler's army there was a suicide squad who were always prepared for anything and everything. Similarly the Vraja Gopis are ready to give up everything for the slightest satisfaction of Krsna. They are prepared to sacrifice at a second's notice not only their whole body but their entire prospect of everything in their connection. Fully risking everything, they have this highest standard of preparedness for the service of Krsna - and that is the highest standard of life. In them we find sacrifice to the extreme. Sacrifice for the good, sacrifice for the Absolute Good, the Absolute Beauty, Bliss and Ecstacy. Your abode will be very near to Him according to your degree and intensity of sacrificing attitude. This is the close approach. By sacrifice we live. By enjoying we lose. By serving we thrive and by enjoying we lose. And the position of renunciation is zero: no loss, no gain - but in comparison with the positive acquisition it is loss. When there is no gain then that is a loss. Renunciation, *mukti,* salvation, mere liberation - by whatever name it is called - is a loss in comparison with the positive attainment of a servitor.

Reality is for itself. It is for nothing else than He. We are for Him - our existence is meant only for Him. Our purpose is to serve Him. He is the integer. He is existing. He is all in all, and we are all subservient. So we are to dissolve our body consciousness, this animal consciousness.

In a dream a man may see that his beheaded body is fallen before him; but that does not affect his existence or his perception. The soul has a similar connection with this world. It is not affected. In a dream he may see that although his body may be pulverized and the earth vanish from under his feet he remains unaffected. Similarly the soul's position is independent. It is not dependent on material existence but it thinks that material things are indispensably necessary to maintain its existence. But this is wrong and a concoction. To stand on a material conception is not necessary for the soul. Although that worldly conception seems to be so very indispensable for our being, it is not so. We are independent from matter. Even the mental existence is independent of this gross material existence what to speak of that of the soul. Soul has nothing to do with this matter which is a foreign, concocted, dream-like substance. Rather, the material conception is poison to the soul and is drawing him in the opposite direction from his real interest.

The Mayavadis and the Buddhists consider that with the dissolution of the material conception nothing remains. And Sankara says that only some non-differentiated consciousness remains in which no individual conception can stand. But the Vaisnavas say, "No, there is a world of reality made of higher stuff than your soul. Your soul is made of vulnerable consciousness, but there is a world of invulnerable consciousness. If you can manage to enter there you will be happy, and only with the interest of rendering service there can you gain such entrance to that land. That sort of adaptability is within you. That is your *svarupa,* your true nature. The adaptability to the positive life is inherent within the soul. You are to blossom and bloom and when full-blown you will reach the Goloka stage."

Wrongly, we have adapted to matter and this has drawn us into the negative side, therefore we are wandering in different stages. This fallen condition is not only unnecessary but is injurious to the soul.

Just as by taking water from in front and sending it behind him a swimmer we can make progress, so also by hearing and chanting, we can make progress. *Sravana-kirttana-jale (Chaitanya charitamrita, 19.152).* We are to hear, and what we acquire we are to distribute to others. A swimmer makes quick progress by passing behind him the water in his front, similarly, in spiritual terms we are to receive from the capitalist and deliver that to the customers. *Sravana kirttana, sravana, kirttana...* By imbibing and exporting we can make good progress and the Absolute Capitalist will supply as much as the customers can receive from Him. This is Mahaprabhu's advice. *Yare dekha, tare kaha 'krsna'-upadesa (Chaitanya charitamrita, Madhya 7.128):* "Deliver these goods to anyone and everyone and new light will come to you which in turn you are to distribute to others. In this way you will have a dynamic and progressive life and there will be no shortage of higher backing."

Swami Maharaj invoked assistance from Krsna. He petitioned Him, "Please come to my help. I have been ordered by Your favourite to do this duty. Please help me. After finishing this duty I shall again join Your play in Vrndavana. There we shall play; we shall run, we shall jump and we shall do anything and everything in a boistrous way together. But for now I have some duty which is necessary to discharge and that duty has been ordered by Your most favourite person. If You help me to carry this out then Your friend, that most favourite friend, will be pleased with You and so You will get some advantage thereby!" In this way he made his petition, *krsna tava punya habe bhai,* "You will acquire good merit if You help me!"

Krsna supported Govarddhan Hill with the little finger of His left hand, and afterwards His friends, the cowherd men and boys told Him, "You did not hold it alone, we also helped You with our sticks! Be reminded of it. You could not do it alone!" They share the pleasure, and also they do not care to think about His extraordinary majesty, power and so forth. They feel, "He is one of us but very beautiful, and we cannot live without Him. We don't know why it is, but somehow if He is not in our midst we are all lifeless, and when He comes we become enlivened like anything." He is their very life and they consider, "He possesses some peculiar power no doubt, but still He is one of us."

If they should hear that He is God, then, "No, no, He can't be God, wo don't admit that. Rather He is our friend. Who says He is God? We don't care for such grand claims. He is our friend, our very charming friend."

Mother Yasoda also thinks, "He is my son but some people don't like that I live in peace, so they say He is God and He is this and He is that. Why do they say such things? He is my child but they are so jealous and envious that they do not like that I may stay living peacefully with my son and husband. They are so envious that they say He is God and He is so-and-so. No! Simply He is my child, only they are unable to tolerate that I have such a beautiful child and therefore they air so many different types of speculation. I don't like these things and this is all a little ominous for my child. Why should He go to be a god? Human beings are real!" *krsnera yateka khela sarvottama nara-lila nara-vapu tdhdra svarilpa.* Mahaprabhu taught that the human society is so valuable because Krsna is originally in this form. This human society is created after His original social style and therefore it is so important, *sarvottama nara-lila, nara-vapu tahara svarupa.*

It is accepted in this world that the human creation is the highest. But the materialists all think, "We are masters of the fossil world. We don't have to give any explanation for our activity to anyone. We are the masters." That is the materialists' scientific standpoint. But sometimes they are afraid, "If higher cultured people are in *sukra-graha* or any other star, should they come here, then we are nowhere. If in a flying saucer they should come once to attack us with any new types of weapons then we are nowhere."

But before this they may fight with one another with atom bombs and destroy everything. Suicidal! This is, after all, the suicidal plane, the discordant plane where one cannot live without devouring his environment. That is the law of this land. If you want to live here then you must devour your environment otherwise you can't survive. So it is the suicidal plane. One is eating another and only then he can live, that too is only for the time being. So is this a proper land to live in?

Prasada— that is the highest solution! The principle necessities of any life here in this world are to preserve and to propagate. Our first priority is to preserve, and for self-preservation we create havoc in the environment by exploitation. The first principle of exploitation begins from the urge for self-preservation, and that means eating. We are to adjust our dealings with the environment in our most primitive necessity which we can't avoid in order to keep body and soul together. So if we can solve this one difficulty, we can almost solve the whole problem.

Prasada-seva korite hoya, sakala prapanca jaya— Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur says that the key to the solution of the whole problem of this mundane life is in *Prasada.* The first necessity of life is eating, and if we can solve that problem, we have solved the whole thing. *Prasada-seva korite hoya, sakala prapanca jaya*— the most important thing is to learn how we should take *Prasadam* to maintain ourselves. Our life depends mainly on that.

To live here we cannot but consume, and we cannot but create devastation in the environment by our eating. If we go to consume anything, even plants, grasses or seeds, then microscopic creatures are being killed. So the question is how to get rid of this reaction? It is said in *Srimad Bhagavad-gita (3.9): yajnarthat karmano 'nyatra, loko 'yam karmma-bandhanah-* we shall get relief from that reaction only if we can successfully connect everything with the Supreme Satisfaction, with Him whose pleasure all existence is meant to fulfil. So, in the taking of food, really we are to be conscious that we are collecting the ingredients for His satisfaction, and then

cooking and offering to Him for His satisfaction - that should be our real purpose. And then because our whole life and energy is for serving Him, we need energy and must take something out of that. But the main point, the real substance of the transaction will be to collect, cook, and offer to Him according to His will expressed in the Scriptures. That is the first step, and only after the foodstuffs have been offered to Him shall we take anything ourselves. This will help to make us always conscious of why we are taking. We are taking because we want only to serve Him. Furthermore, whatever has been accepted by the Lord, the 'poison,' the bad reaction, will have been absorbed and digested by Him just as in the case of Mahadeva who drank the poison generated from the Ocean of Milk.

Krsna is absolute and can digest anything. Not only that, but those things which have been consumed in His connection also receive promotion, so actually there is no *himsa,* violence. What appears to be *himsa* is not really so, because those whom are apparently violently treated actually receive a high promotion through connection with the Supreme. In addition whoever has been instrumental in fulfilling that connection will also receive some reward. So the devotee must think, "What shall I take? I won't take anything from the world, I shall take only from my Master, as His grace. It is His grace. His free grace to me— *Prasada."*

The word *Prasada* means 'kindness,' 'grace.' The devotee will feel, "Whatever service I do, I am not expecting anything to be paid to me in return. It is a free transaction. And whatever I receive is only His grace. So I shall take *Prasada,* then I shall be free from all entanglement of action and reaction even though I am in the midst of it. Because it is a fact that with every action I must disturb the environment, then if all my actions are meant for Him, the Supreme Lord, there will be no bad reaction coming to me, but rather the opposite reaction will occur and help not only me but those that were offered also. Through me, through myself as a centre, such waves will emanate that will help others to progress in their path of purification."

So, through the godliness in his heart, everyone must be a purifying agent. God is on the throne of the heart, and from there He will emanate such. a fine ray which will purify not only that person's heart, but also the environment. 'Vaisnava' means a purifying agent who emanates goodness, absolute goodness, everywhere - through his movements, his words, his actions, everything: deed, thought and word, *kaya, mana, vakya.* A Vaisnava is an agent of auspiciousness; *te vaisnavah bhuvanamasu pavitrayanti.* There are so many Vaisnavas, and by their chanting the Holy Name, by all their practices and by their whole lives, they are like so many purifying agents.

By proper knowledge, proper dealings and proper conduct they set everything in ifs proper position and create adjustment in the domain of maladjustment. This world is maladjusted, and the balancing agents, the unifying factors, are the Vaisnavas. Just as there is a germ, a virus which spreads a particular contagious disease, so there must be the opposite of that, something which emanates only a pure and healthy atmosphere, and that is the Vaisnava.

Chapter 3

Personal Glimpses

Devotee: Please can you tell us how you happened to meet your Srila Sridhar Maharaj, Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: There is some background to our first meeting. When I was at school I had some appreciation for the students from East Bengal because I had heard from one of my cousins about their sacrifice for their country and so forth. So during my college days I would take my seat in that hostel where they generally lived. When I came in the association of the students there I found there to be two sections. Many were studying medicine. If any patient was admitted or any other physical duty was required one section would immediately run to meet those requirements. Another section was inclined to be engaged in meditation, chanting the Holy Names, doing *sandhya* (worship), and so forth but they would hate to attend to any patient or other such duties.

My own nature was inclined to both kinds of duties, and when I was a fourth year student I suddenly met a boy from the first year who was similarly inclined. He would engage himself in meditation, *sandhya,* etc. He would take the Name and sing the praises of the Lord, but also if any patient should be admitted he would forget his class and studies and attend to him. That attracted me towards him and I tried to gain his association.
One morning we were going to the jungle to collect twigs in order to cleanse our teeth when in the course of our talk he said suddenly about his father. He referred to him as, "That gentleman." I protested that it was disrespectful to use such a term for his respectable father. Then he said, "Yes, I should not have mentioned in that way in your presence, but ultimately it is really so. Where was I in my previous lives? Only he is a 'gentleman' to me because it is only in this life that I have come in his house."

Somehow that touched a fine chord in me and I began to think, "Yes it is right. Nobody can stay here; not the father, the mother, the brothers or even this house. Everything is temporarily connected and I am wandering in eternity." That sort of impression came in me in a very, very intense form, and the whole world became as if it was just empty - fully empty. At that time that boy anyhow connected me with the life of Mahaprabhu.

Presently I was given a publication about Sri Chaitanyadeva by the gentleman who founded the Amrta Bazar Patrika newspaper. Into my thirsty mind I drank fully the life of Mahaprabhu with much pleasure, and my attraction was drawn to Him. I also think that from my previous life there was some attraction. I found that my mother's family had some connection with Mahaprabhu but my father's family were anti-Gauranga. They were strictly *smartta brahmanas,* worshippers of the Sakti, or Goddess, and logicians of the *nyaya* school. But somehow, I had connection with Gaurariga and then I came to want a good connection with the His devotees. I searched for such a *sadhu* to accept as my Gurudeva, but I was not satisfied and in due course I went to study law in Calcutta. Then, leaving college I joined with the non-cooperation movement of Gandhi. I joined temporarily because I considered that my fate was already tied with Mahaprabhu and therefore could not give anyone my whole life's energy. After six years the movement allowed me temporary leave.

I was in search of a Gurudeva. The founder of Bharat Seva Asram was the same age as myself. His name was Paramananda. That boy whom I had met in college was connected with him and so I also met him, but he was a *karmmi.* He tried his best to take me within his fold. I answered him, "No, my head is already sold to Gaurariga Mahaprabhu."

He said, "Yes I also recognize Gaurariga Mahaprabhu to be the highest, but first it is necessary to follow the *vairagya,* the indifference and renunciation of Buddha, then the discussion of the *Vedanta* of Sankara, and after that the highest is the *Prema* of Sri Chaitanyadeva. Without following each step, that *Prema* would be misunderstood by the ordinary section."
He explained in that way, and of course I was very much pleased to hear him giving such position to Mahaprabhu. But I put to him this question: "You say that first we must pass through the stages given by Buddha and then Sankara and only then come to Chaitanyadeva, but Chaitanyadeva did not say, 'If you want to come to Me, come through Buddha and Sankara and then to Me.' Rather He said, 'Wherever you are you can take the Name with the company of the *sadhu* and in that way you will come to Me.' He did not say, 'First become Buddhist, then become Sankarite and then you will come to Me.' He did not say so." He became silent.

I asked him, "If you have some *siddhi,* you please say where is my Gurudeva." Then he gave some idea: "Go to that particular gentleman." By his request I went there but that man was not present.
Then one day I found that there was a placard advertising a one month festival in the Gaudiya Math at No.l Ultadingi Junction Road near Poresanath Temple. I went to visit that place thinking that having the name 'Gaudiya' they must have some connection with Sri Chaitanyadeva, and I found, "Yes, they are educated men. It is a gentleman's association and they are well studied in Scripture as well as being very good practitioners."

In our family of course there was no intoxication and they followed so many other pure practices, and I found also such conduct there at the Gaudiya Math. But what attracted me most was their deep knowledge of the Scriptures. I had done some studying but still I felt myself to be in a lower position concerning knowledge of the *Bhagavad-gita, Bhagavatam,* Sriman Mahaprabhu, etc. Their high regard for the Scriptures attracted me very much. I began to go there to hear, and gradually became inspired.

I had some objections in the beginning but I found that what those devotees gave was correct, and my conception was wrong. In this way I gained understanding and inspiration by hearing more and more.
Whenever anything was said to them from the Scriptures they would come to listen very carefully. But if something was said quoting Aurobindo, Vivekananda, Ramakrsna, Gandhi, etc. it was summarily rejected, "No, no, we have no time to lose. We have no time to waste to hear all this." But whenever there was reference to any Scriptures their reaction was, "Yes, what do you say? Please express it."

What attracted me most was that they had within them such devout appreciation for the Scriptures and for the risis, as was also in me perhaps to an overflowing degree. Thereby gradually I discovered the real meaning of *Srimad Bhagavad-gita* for which already I had great appreciation and reverence. I was pleased to find that they are very much part of this Mission and I learnt a-

mongst other things that Sri Chaitanyadeva and Sri *Caitanya-caritamrta* are the highest authority.

I then entered into the Mission. Whatever misunderstandings I had, gradually cleared. I was converted, so much so that even the senior men used to ask me, "What Srila Prabhupada has said, please repeat it for our clarification." And I would repeat, reproducing for them what I had heard from Srila Prabhupada, and they were satisfied. In this way I came to such a position that generally the educated section began to say, "Sridhar Maharaj can represent the things very well."

One respectable gentleman similarly said, "In a very concise form he can represent the very substance and without any excitement."
There are some who when they say something show signs of excitement, but in a sober temperament I would try to deliver the substance using only a few words. I was not very pushing, not forward, but rather my nature was to hang behind. I would not try to go ahead and be in the front, but it would be as though I was playing from behind. That was my nature, keeping myself back, and more busy for my own realizations as to the meanings of the different *slokas of Srimad-Bhagavatam, Sri Caitanya-caritamrtam, etc.* Generally I would meditate on the meanings of the various *slokas.* Sometimes also I would perhaps receive some new illumination and understanding concerning the meaning of the higher plane. In this way I passed my days.

I first came across Swami Maharaj a little later in Allahabad when he was the agent of Kartti Bose of Bengal Chemicals. Then in the Bombay Math also I had his company for a long time. But the main association I had with him was in Calcutta after the departure of our Guru Maharaj. I opened a centre there in the house next to his, which was also owned by him. Downstairs there was a laboratory and on the first floor there were four rooms that I took on sublease from him. I stayed there for some time. He used to come almost every day and we had discussions about the inner meanings and teachings of *Bhagavad-gita.* Briefly we discussed other things also, but mainly our discussions were based on the *Bhagavad-gita.* Govinda Maharaj was there all along. Hari Charan Prabhu was a newcomer then and he also was there for some time. Govinda Maharaj was very much liked by Swami Maharaj who often mentioned, "I saw him as my child."

That was how I became connected with the Gaudiya Math and joined in the Mission.

Devotee: Srila Sridhar Maharaj, what inspired you to compose the book *Sri-Sri Prapanna-jivanamrtam?*

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Much later when I left the association of the disciples of our Srila Prabhupada to live alone, I felt some sort of helplessness within me. I knew that *Sarandgati,* surrender, is the indispensable necessity in the life of a devotee, and felt, "I have left, or somehow or other I am excluded from the company of Prabhupada's association. I am helpless, but *Sarandgati* may come to my relief." So I especially came to think, *"Saranagati* is the basis, but what is *Saranagati?"*
On reading Bhaktivinoda Thakur's book *Saranagati,* this point impressed me most. He wrote,
sad anga saranagati haibe yanhara tanhara prarthana sune sri nanda-kumara "If you want Nanda Kumar, you must have this six-fold *Saranagati**," I wanted to culture that, so at that time after coming to live alone I recollected all I had imbibed in my Math life, and also consulted about *Sarandgati* in *Hari-bhakti-vilasa,* in Jiva Goswami's *Bhakti-sandarbha,* and in the Rama-

nuja *Sampradaya's* writings. I then tried to collect it all together and arrange it in a particular way as I thought best. In this way I began to write the book *Sri-Sri Prapanna-jivanamrtam* that it may also help others who might come in such a position as mine. That was the real reason.

The six limbs of *Saranagati* are: i) acceptance of the favourable; ii) rejection of the unfavourable; iii) full confidence in the Lord's protection; iv) embracing the Lord's guardianship; v) full self-surrender; and, vi) surrender in humility.

Devotee: What is the meaning of its title?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: The title *Sri-Sri Prapanna-jivanamrtam* means, *prapannanam, jivane, amrta-svarupam,* "The nectar in the life of the surrendered souls." This was my conception from the beginning - *prapanna-jivanamrta* - that those who have come to take this, to feel it, this will be like nectar to them. To those who have surrendered, it will be nectar to *them,* but others, the ordinary people, may not appreciate it.

It will be the nectar in the life of those who have surrendered, those who have the real *adhikara,* the proper qualified standard of faith to receive it. Srila Jiva Goswami wrote, "Those who have faith in the *Veda,* in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and such things, *they* are to read this book; otherwise, I put a curse, that those who do not have such faith should not come to read my book." Jiva Goswami has written in such a way: "You unbelievers won't come to touch my book. You who are unbelievers, it is not meant for you! It is only for those who have faith in such things. Others are discarded. You, the ordinary public are discarded. You must not touch my book because you will misunderstand it."

This is also a custom of proper behaviour. If one goes to venture to read such things, at least he must approach with some caution, and not with the mood of curiosity, "Oh, why does he say this?" for that will be dangerous. So, *adhikari nirnaya*— that whoever will come to read the *Veda,* if he has not attained the standard, he will misunderstand, or mutilate it.
Paroksa-vado vedo 'yam, balanam anusasanam (Bhagavatam, 11.3.44). "The Vedic purport is presented in an indirect, veiled manner in order to instruct undisciplined, childishly foolish persons."

In his *Uttara-mimdmsd of* the *Vedanta-sutra,* Vedavyasa has written *athato brahma-jijnasa.* Sri Sankaracaryya says that in relation to this aphorism *athato*— means *anantaram*— 'after this.' After what? "After one has attained *Sama, dama, titiksa;* all these qualifications. One who has qualities such as having controlled his senses and his mental speculations *(Sama, dama),* having a very tolerant and persevering spirit *(titiksa),* and so on, he will come to study this book. After he has acquired a certain grade in such qualities, he will come to study this. It is not for the ordinary people who will misunderstand, misinterpret and mutilate it thus creating trouble in society." So for the benefit of society Sankaracharyya says that only such persons will come, and they will gain a clear and proper understanding. They will then preach that to the public in particular instalments and all will be benefited thereby.

Ramanuja says, "No, *athato* does mean that. *Athato* means, 'after finishing the *purvva-mimamsa of* Jaimini.' There is *purvva-mimamsa* (primary teaching) and *uttara-mimamsa* (higher teaching). So, after one has finished the course of *purvva-mimamsa,* that is, *niskama varnasrama-dharm-*

ma, he will then come to understand the study of this *uttara-mimamsa.* When he has finished successfully the *karmmadhikara* he will come to enter into *jnanadhikara* and that will be beneficial to him." This is Ramanuja's opinion.

And Baladeva Vidyabhusana says, "Whoever he may be, whether a *karmmi* or *jnani, atha* means he must have *sat-sanga, sadhu-sanga.* From any position, if he can get the association of a proper *sadhu,* he is qualified to study this book and he will understand the real meaning."

So everywhere there is consideration of *adhikar*— that is, *yogyata,* or 'fitness.' He must acquire the standard of qualification, then he will come to tackle the particular plane, and he must have healthy association.

Devotee: Our Guru Maharaj, Srila Swami Maharaj Prabhupada, used to say, *athatho* means, "now that we have come to the human form of life," "after coming to the human form of life."

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: But the human form of life alone is not sufficient. *Sat-sanga, sadhu-sanga,* is necessary, *sad-guru caranasraya.* Anyone who has received the grace of a *sadhu* can have that nectar, whereas, *ya'o pada bhagavata vaisnavera sthane,* even a *brahmana* may not be qualified to enter into the *Bhagavatam.* Sriman Mahaprabhu said, "Go to a Vaisnava, from him you will get the real stand-point of *Bhagavatam* and how to approach it."

Devananda Pandit, a real *brahmana* of noted scholarship, was a 'professor' of *Bhagavatam.* Many people used to come to hear from him. But although a scholar, his stand-point was that of the Sankara school. Srivasa Pandit also lived locally but he was an expert in the real explanations of *Bhagavatam.*
Mahaprabhu suddenly one day said, "Oh, that Devananda Pandit, he teaches *Bhagavatam* to so many students, but he himself does not know its real purport. He is spreading poison in the name of *Bhagavatam.* I shall go and tear up his books!" Inspired one day with such a spirit Mahaprabhu suddenly ran towards that place, but Srivasa Pandit, and others perhaps, stopped Him, saying, "No, no, this won't look good for you."

Anyhow, on another day Mahaprabhu met Devananda Pandit and told him, "You are teaching *Srimad-Bhagavatam* to the students, but do you know what is there in *Bhagavatam?* You yourself do not know what nectar is there."
In a very ridiculing way, Mahaprabhu told him:

paripurna kariya ye saba jane khaya
tabe bahirddese giya se santosa paya
(Sri Caitanya bhagavat, Madhya 21.73)

"When one who has eaten and has a full belly goes to the latrine, while passing stool he feels some relief, but you do not even get *that* sort of meagre pleasure! But in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* there is such high nectar, such high taste, but you, such a mean fellow with your mean mind, approach the *Bhagavatam* and teach it in such a filthy way. What do you know about *Bhagavatam?"*

On another occasion, Srivasa Pandit came to hear *Bhagavatam* from Devananda's *tol,* Sanskrit school. While Devananda was pronouncing the *slokas,* Srivasa was understanding them in his own way thus causing many feelings to come in him: sometimes he shed tears and sometimes he shivered. Devananda Pandit told his students, "Oh, that man has come to disturb us with ail these lower sentiments. Take him out!" So, his students took Srivasa Pandit from there and left him outside; but that enraged Mahaprabhu.

Later on Mahaprabhu's intimate devotee, Vakresvara Pandit, came to Devananda's house. He came and had a private talk with Devananda, and Devananda was converted: "Yes, I did not know that such meanings may be found in *Srimad-Bhagavatam.* I was influenced by Sankaracharyya's teaching that Brahman is all-in-all, therefore I considered these topics of *Bhagavatam to* be all *saguna,* all under Maya." So, when Mahaprabhu after five years of *sannyasa* came again to visit this area, Kuliya here in Nabadwip Dham, Devananda fell at His feet, crying, "I have made such great offences!"
Mahaprabhu said, "Yes, but you have committed offences not so much against Me as against Srivasa Pandit. Go and beg forgiveness from him and you will be absolved from your offences."

kuliya-gramete asi' sri-krsna-caitanya hena
nahi, ya 're prabhu na karila dhanya
(Caitanya bhagavat, Antya 3.541)

In this way Capala Gopal and many others who had made so many bad remarks about *6ri* Chaitanyadev's conduct all came there to Him saying: "We could not understand Your outstanding personality and superiority, therefore we have unknowingly done much wrong against You. Please forgive us."
Mahaprabhu forgave them saying, "Oh, no, no, there is nooffence, everything is alright. Go away peacefully now."
So also, in the case of reading *Srimad-Bhagavatam* there is this question of *adhikara* and *satsanga.* Even a *brahmana* may not have the proper position to understand, what to speak of teach, the Scriptures. Only *sadhu-sanga*— the association of a good teacher—is necessary to understand the *Sastra.*

Ragunatha Bhatta was the son of Tapana Misra and he lived in Benares. Tapana Misra was a devotee and scholar. When Ragunatha Bhatta went to visit Mahaprabhu in Puri, Mahaprabhu told him, "Don't marry but serve your parents, they are Vaisnavas. When they pass away, go to Vrndavana and live with Rupa and Sanatana. In the meantime, read *Srimad-Bhagavatam* under the guidance of a Vaisnava teacher. From him you will get the real stand-point from which to approach the subject in order to see what is its theme, what is its end and so forth. Such a teacher will be able to give you real direction in your study of all these matters;

ya'o pada bhagavata vaisnavera sthane.

Similarly Baladeva Vidyabhusana comes to say that a person may be from any position, but if he approaches a proper guide, a Guru, he can receive the capacity to enter into the meaning of the Scripture.

Devotee: What is the meaning of *bhakti-rasa-patra* in the following verse?

eka bhagavata bada - bhagavata-sastra ara
bhagavata - bhakta bhakti-rasa-patra
(Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi 1.99)

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: This verse explains that there are two types of *Bhagavatas:* the book *Bhagavata* and the person *Bhagavata. Bhakti-rasa-patra* means the *sadhu,* one who is living the life of a *Bhagavata. Bhagavata-rasa-patra*— means 'one containing divine *rasam* pertaining to Bhagavan.' Living Scripture is *Bhagavata* and the Vaisnava is *Bhagavata.* The *Srimad Bhagavata* is the Scripture, and the person *Bhagavata* is also the Scripture.

Devotee: What is the specific meaning of *bhakti-rasa-patra?*

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: *Bhakti-rasa-patra* means a person who is 'filled up,' or a pot which is filled up with *rasa—raso vai sah.* He is full of *anandam. Patra* means 'person' as well as 'pot'. There are two meanings of the word *patra:* it means both a 'pot, glass, container,' and 'the person who is also a 'container'.'

So, in the title of my book, *amrtam* means— *prapanna-jivanamrtam,* or *prapannanam jivane amrta-svarupam:* for those who are surrendered, it is the nectar in their lives. It is the nectar in the soul's surrender. It will sustain the surrendered souls like *amrtam,* nectar, and they will live by taking that; it is their food and will give them sustenance.

Devotee: We would like to hear from you, Srila Sridhar Maharaj, how Nityananda Prabhu asked you to come here to Nabadwip and start giving initiations.

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Sometime after the departure of Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Prabhupada I was asked by some leading members to take the position of Acaryya; but from the beginning I had within me no impression or inspiration to do so. However when I came to stay alone there was always some sort of hesitation in me that my Guru Maharaj did not like *nirjjana-bhajana,* the separate practising life. He liked that devotees would associate together and engage in *kirttana.* But if I live in an association it would mean there must be preaching and many newcomers will join, but who will give them initiation? They asked me to take the charge of initiating but I did not feel any inner inspiration to do so. I did not feel any urge for that, but I was anyway passing my time in the cultivation of Krsna consciousness.

Before I went to Vrndavana I had in mind that I would not stay there. I felt that Vrndavana is for the higher devotees but I am of lower order. The fallen should take shelter under Mahaprabhu at *aparadha-bhanjan-pat* (the place where all offences are forgiven) in Nabadwip, so it was a foregone conclusion to me that I would take my shelter in Nabadwip, and not Vrndavana.

By the grace of Nityananda Prabhu we can receive the grace of Mahaprabhu. There is no other alternative for us, the fallen souls, especially the beginners. *Heno nitai bine bhai, radhd-krsna paite nai*— by the grace of Nityananda we shall receive the grace of Gauranga and by the grace of Gauranga we shall receive the grace of Radha-Govinda. That is the general way—the grand trunk road that was even foretold by Lord Brahma: *krsna bhakta haya yadi balavana, bidhira*

kalama kathi kore khan khan— "If a devotee of Sri Krsna is very powerful, he can easily cut into pieces that which is written down as his destiny."

Then when I came from Vrndavana to take my permanent residence here at this *aparadha-bhanjan-path,* Koladwip, I thought, "I am going to take my shelter in Nabadwip Dham permanently. But *Dhamesvara,* the Master of the Dham, is Nityananda Prabhu, therefore before going to Mahaprabhu's birthplace I must visit Nityananda Prabhu's birthplace at Ekachakra and beg His permission. If He is propitiated then I may live in Nabadwip Dham safely, otherwise it will be impossible." So before I came here I went straight to Nityananda Prabhu's birthplace and made my prostrate obeisances with the prayer, "You are *patita-pavann,* saviour of the fallen, and I crave Your mercy. Please grant me permission to stay permanently at Koladwip in Nabadwip Dham, that I may have my shelter there." At that time I had already chosen this place at Gupta Govarddhana.

Whenever I fell flat with that prayer, at once some urge came in my mind, "You are praying for the grace of Nityananda Prabhu as *patita-pavana* but you are apathetic to *patita,* the fallen, so how can you hope to have His sympathy?" This suddenly came in my mind. "Nityananda Prabhu is *patita-pavana* but I do not like to extend my helping hand to others, so how can I expect His grace and mercy?" That sort of strong reflection came in me and anyhow I put forward my position to Him and came here. Also our Srila Prabhupada's nature was always pressing on my mind: he was always against *nirjjana-bhajana* but I was going to do that very thing.

Anyhow, I came here and for two rupees per month I rented a room nearby and stayed there. During the day-time I read the *Sastra* and from evening I used to take the Holy Name, and after finishing the chanting of one lakh (100,000) Names I would go to bed.
I took Giridhari with me from Vrndavana and kept Him on a small throne in the room. I would cook something just once in a day, offer to Giridhari and then take some *Prasadam.* In the evening I would also take a little *Prasadam,* and in this way I passed my days. Unknown to anyone I came to this place but gradually my Godbrothers searched for me, and finding me, they began to come now and then. Some began to stay and did not want to leave.

At that time when going through the books of Jiva Goswami I found he had written that those who have money but do not spend it for the Lord, they commit *vitta-sathya.* Similarly those who have some knowledge and experience about *bhakti,* about Krsna and the devotees, but do not like to help others, they commit *jnana-sathya.* At the same time I had in my memory from my early days a story from the *Puranas* where it is mentioned that a particular *brahmana* was a big scholar but he gave no education or help to anyone. As a result, in his next life he received the body of a mango tree which bore many beautiful fruits, but not even a single bird would touch them. Then one day Anantadeva noticed the tree while on his way to see God. When he enquired about it, the Lord replied, "He was a great *pandit* but he did not instruct or give his share of learning to anybody. He was so miserly in his scholarship that in his next birth he was put in such a position as this tree."

Another thing also came to my mind, that a doctor is not omniscient, but should he not try his best to cure a patient? As much as he has capacity he must try to help, otherwise the world will be at a stand-still. It is not that everyone will say, "Only if I have complete and full knowledge will I approach to help another," for that is not possible in this world. Everyone has some relative

position. With this also coming to my mind I began in a mild way to help. I decided not to engage on a broader scale to would try to educate him in this spiritual line in the minimum way, or to initiate. With this spirit I took my position here remembering the inspiration from *patita-pavana* Nityananda Prabhu that came to me: "You must try your best to help those that in your consideration are fallen."
I was not fully reluctant, but I was not making any big attempt because it is mentioned also in the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* that it is prohibited to make so many temples and so many programmes on a big scale:

bahu-grantha kalabhyasa vyakhyavada-vivarjanam vyava
hareha pyakarpanyam sokadyavasavartita
(Sri Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhuh Madhya, 2.79.76)

When our Guru Maharaj was delivering lectures from *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* on the 64 kinds of devotion, I noted, "Establishing temples and programmes on a large scale is prohibited there, but our Srila Sridhar Maharaj is doing that very thing. On a big scale he is making propaganda and money, and he is spending also in great quantities to construct the temples and other things. In *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* Rupa Goswami has prohibited this but yet our Guru Maharaj has undertaken all these things. What will he say when this point comes up for discussion?"

Then I found that in one or two words he explained the whole thing. He said, "It is a question of personal capacity. One man may manage an empire and may still find time for leisure whereas another man is barely able to manage his family and cannot find any leisure-time." So it depends on the capacity of the individual whether something will be considered great or small. It is a question of personal capacity, and according to our capacity we must try our best.

Chapter 4

Affectionate Krsna

Some poets can describe very beautifully anything they touch; that is called *kavi.* Someone may be a renowned *kavi,* but that does not mean he is an Acharyya. His life may be a filthy one, and what we receive from him is not acceptable. Professor Nisikanta Sanyal, the author of Sri *Krsna Chaitanya,* was a very strong and almost 'blind' follower of our Srila Sridhar Maharaj. After coming to this line of Gaudiya Math he noted in his diary, "One who does not sincerely believe in a particular creed, but goes to write about and eulogize that line of thought, is a hypocrite. We must be very careful about this: to see if a man does not actually believe what he himself says. If the man and his word are different we must not believe him, rather we should be very careful in his association. He does not believe in what he is saying. He himself does not believe it, so he is just a hypocrite who is double-dealing!" This was found in Nisikanta Sanyal's diary.

Once a doctor came to give me treatment when I was ill. He said, "You have come this far in your life and have passed so many days wearing your red cloth, what have you achieved?" He wanted to know: "You are passing so many days as a red-clad man, but have you got anything?"
I said, "Yes; and I think I have enough as to say with boldness that what is written by so many big poets who don't have the conviction given in their own writings is all false! They may hold the highest position in the 'culture' of the present day, but what they are giving is all wrong and filthy. This much I have understood!"

One of my friends from my previous life also came to see me and put to me a straight question. He asked, "What have you got, have you seen God?" I answered, "No, I have not yet seen Him as you may think He is to be 'seen'."
Then he asked, "What have you got, that for so long you have lived such a life?" Then I told him, "The great famous *kavis* of our land, they had nothing, and what they said is all false, this much I have understood!" He was very much depressed and went away. This kind of 'sight,' when they said that "this is God," and "I have seen God," is all false and empty. It is all *saguna: it* is within Maya.

There is another important example that comes to mind. I had been in the Mission perhaps only a year or so. At that time the Calcutta Math was in a hired house at Ultadingi, and on the Day of Appearance of Bhaktivinoda Thakur there was a festival. A pandal had been erected in the street, and meetings were going on there. One respectable zamindar was invited by our Godbrother, Goswami Maharaj, and he asked Prabhupada, "I want to have a very private talk with you."

It was on a dark night, and a meeting was arranged. Two chairs were placed together. Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Prabhupada came there and that gentleman sat close to him. I was thinking that Prabhupada should not be left alone, and so managed to take a position a little distance away in the darkness. I was also very curious: "What does he have to say?" Then that man, very close to our Guru Maharaj's ear, whispered, "Have you seen God?"
Srila Prabhupada's answer was, "What is the good of saying that, 'I have seen,' or, 'I have not seen'? As long as *you* don't know how to see or know what is necessary to see God, you cannot get any benefit by my mere statement that, 'I have seen,' or, *I* have not seen.' You are blind to both things. The first thing is that you should learn *how to* see God. You must get that sort of

'eye' to see God. Without that, any man may say, 'I have seen'—but what is that to you? You may be deceived! If I say, 'No, I have not seen your 'God'—what you have concocted within you as God—that will also just misguide you."

As Prabhupada tried to say this the zamindar repeatedly asked, "Have you seen, have you seen?" But Prabhupada firmly stuck to his own point: "That will be of no good to you. You should know what is God, how to see Him, and what is His nature; all of this you must study yourself, otherwise you will be deceived by anyone and everyone. A mere statement has no value." Such was the meeting I witnessed there.

On another occasion our Madhav Maharaj, who was first named Hayagriva Brahmachari, went with his cousin-brother, Narayana Mukharji, to visit Katwa in order to see Mahaprabhu's *Sri-Murtti.* From there they came to see Mayapur and then to Srila Prabhupada. Prabhupada saw the two young men of fair complexion approaching him, and asked, "Where have you been?" Hayagriva answered, "We went to Katwa to have *darsana* of Mahaprabhu's *Sri Vigraha* there."
I heard from Madhav Maharaj himself that Prabhupada pressed him: "Did you see? Could you *see* Mahaprabhu?" They said, "Yes, ordinarily we have seen." But the way he put his question and pressed, "Have you had *darsana?"* raised some question within their minds, "Oh, he means something else. *Real* sight" They then reflected, "Yes, we have seen what ordinary men see. But that is not proper seeing. If we want to see Him, then we have to get such an eye by going to Guru."

om ajnana timirandhasya jnananjana-salakaya caksur
unmilitam yena tasmai sri gurave namah

"I was blind in the darkness of ignorance but my Spiritual Master applied the ointment of proper spiritual knowledge and thus opened my eyes. Unto him I offer my respectful obeisances." All these things came in Prabhupada's teaching.

Hayagriva Prabhu, who was previously Herambo Banarjee, related that he had been working in a private European company when suddenly by reading a book of Sankaracharyya he felt some intense indifference to worldly life. He then ran away to Hardvara and went far up into the hills where he stayed for three days and three nights under a tree, only eating some bael fruit. Then, as he told me, "I heard a sound: 'Leave here now, you will find a real Guru, a *sad-Guru.* You will find him, so now you leave.'" He came back down, and consequently to the Gaudiya Mission. That was Herambo Banerjee, who was later called Ganesa, then Hayagriva Brahmachari, and finally Madhav Maharaj.

So the question is, "How to see?" The proper eye is necessary and that is called *divya-darsana.* In *Srimad Bhagavad-gita,* Krsna says to Arjuna:

na tu mam sakyase drastum, anenaiva sva-caksusa
divyam dadami te caksuh, pasya me yogam aisvaram
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 11.8)

"By these present eyes of yours you will not be able to see Me. Therefore I give you supernatural eyes by which you can see My almighty, mystic power." But here we find another extraordinary

consideration: Arjuna already had the capacity of higher vision (to see the Lord in His two-handed human-like original form), so here the *divya-darsana* that was given to Arjuna in order to see that Universal Form of the Lord meant he was to come down to a lower level. He had to actually come down to have that kind of *darsana of* the Lord, which was not the highest. Then, when Arjuna could not tolerate that *divya-darsana,* he said, "I cannot bear it. You please come to my level, as I had experience of You before." Then the Lord became first *catur-bhuja* (four-armed form of Narayana) and then *dvi-bhuja* (two-armed human-like form of Krsna), and Arjuna said,

drstvedam manusam rupam, tava saumyam janarddana
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 11.51)

"O Sri Krsna, seeing this charming two-armed, human-featured form of Yours, now my heart has become fulfilled and pacified. Now I have come to my normal position."

Then the Lord said:

sudurdarsam idam rupam, drstavan asi yan mama deva
apy asya rupasya, nityam darsana-kanksinah
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 11.52)

"Oh Arjuna, the chance to see Me as you are now seeing Me before you is very, very rarely attained. Even the gods constantly aspire for a glimpse of this human-like form of truth, consciousness and beauty."

Generally it may be thought that the *divya-darsana,* the vision of the Universal Form, is what is very rarely to be found. But by the specific use of the words *drstavan asi,* in the present tense, and not *drstavan* which is past tense, our interpreters say that here what is being referred to is the human-like form. The Lord is saying, *deva apy asya rupasya, nityam darsana-kanksinah,* "At present, how you are seeing Me, that is in My two-handed figure. But the public can't understand, they generally look to My *catur-bhuja-rupa,* four handed form. Or they look to My *divya-rupa,* which contains the whole cosmic manifestation within, as the highest; but that is a troublesome form of Myself. It is not natural, but it is like My playing the part of a magician: 'Everything is in Me! See this, and this and now this!' That is not *aprakrta* but it is full of majesty of different types mixed together."

But the *aprakrta-rupa* is *dvi-bhuja,* the two-handed form. Krsna told Arjuna:

sudurdarsam idam rupam, drstavan asi yan mama
deva apy asya rupasya, nityam darsana-kanksinah
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 11.52)

"This *saccidananda* two-armed human-like form of mine which you are seeing is very, very rarely seen. Even the demigods constantly aspire for a glimpse of this form."

Of all the Lord's Pastimes, the highest is very near to that of human type— *aprakrta.* It is like human life. Rather, human life has been fashioned after His highest form of Playful Life. The

model is there in the original, highest form of life, and human society has been fashioned after that.

In the Bible also it is said, "God made man after His own image." And the *Vrndavana-lila* appears most human-like and ordinary, even to the extent where the Lord acts like a rogue and a debauchee by stealing, lying and doing anything and everything— all in the sweetest way. Without it being so arranged, those who serve the Lord in particular *rasas* cannot maintain their positions. Perhaps if He did not steal and make such boisterousness. Mother Yasoda would die! So such roguery and impertinence is there. Though externally Yasoda is angry, still her very constitution is such that if that impertinence were absent she could not live! An important part of *vatsalya-rasa* is the essential pleasure in tolerating the impertinence of the child.

Krsna is always *aprakrta. Prakrta* means 'mundane' and *aprakrta* means similar in appearance to the mundane plane but in fact just the opposite. He appears to be similar to the patient but it is not so.

krsnera yateka khela sarvottama nara-lila nara-vapu tahara svarupa
gopa-vesa venukara nava-kisora natavara nara-lila haya anurupa
krsnera madhura-rupa suna sanatana
ye rupera eka kana dubaya saba tribhuvana sarvva-prani kare akarsana
(Sri Chaitanya-charitamrta, Madhya 21.101,102)

"The most supreme form of Godhead is Krsna, who plays in His eternal Divine Pastimes just like a human being. An ever-youthful cowherd boy of Vrndavana, He enacts His Pastimes, always playing His flute. His beauty is so charming and sweet that the whole universe is flooded by an atom of it, and all beings are drawn irresistibly to Him."

It has been mentioned in the Scripture that amongst all the Lord's Pastimes the human-like Pastimes are the best. His human-like behaviour has been considered to be the highest and most tasteful conception. The highest type is not the godly, grave and majestic, rather the simplicity of His apparently ordinary human-like behaviour has been considered to be the best of all and the most original. Grandeur, majesty, and awe and reverence are not liked by the devotees of higher type. These qualities imply a very distant relationship whereas the human-like relationship is very intensely intimate and close, as if equal with us; and that has been said to be the highest mercy. When He shows such merciful Pastimes, that really is His highest position. There He appears as though of the same rank as His servitors and He is so merciful, so loving, and so affectionate. Sometimes Mother Yasoda whips Him and He weeps, and sometimes He carries His father's shoes upon His head, and sometimes His friends climb on His shoulders. Through this affection He in many ways shows Himself to be very homely; so very homely. His magnanimity, love and affection is of such a high degree that He becomes so homely.

The *'aprakrta* realm' must be the origin of everything. It cannot but be so. Here in India we have our Vedic culture and tradition, but the present-day *pandits*— the European scholars—say, "No, the first origin of civilization was from Asia Minor, or Babylon, or some other quarter." The empirical scholars are of a particular opinion, but we do not accede to that. If we can accept that the *aprakrta* realm is the origin of everything, then whatever is there, although appearing simple and plain, contains within it all the grandeur of Vaikuntha. In Sri *Caitanya-caritamrtam* there is a

description of the discussion between Svarupa Damodara Goswami and Srivasa Pandit on *Hera-pancami* day. Srivasa Thakur was an incarnation of Narada Muni. In order that the truth be known to the public so others may understand, he pleaded on behalf of the opposition party. He spoke in favour of the supremacy Vaikuntha, with all its grandeur and splendour. In response Svarupa Damodara said, "It is not actually so, but, Srivasa, you, being in the mood and temperament of Narada Muni, can appreciate more about the majesty and grandeur of Vaikuntha. Don't you know, can't you remember that although the *ratnam,* the jewels etc., are all in Vrndavana in a suppressed way, the residents there do not like such things."

Those who are poor adore gold and jewels whereas those who have enough of such riches prefer flowers, trees, and all such natural, simple things. Similarly, the grandeur of Vaikuntha is suppressed in the *aprakrta* world where there are *kalpa-vrksas*— desire-fulfilling trees—and where everything is made of *cintamani,* touchstone. Anything can produce anything there in that original place! So. once we admit that to be the original position, by deduction we will see that everything, however gorgeous and dignified must all come from there. And that is the acme. By analysis and logic we must regulate our thoughts in that direction.

Chapter 5

Priority Service

Generally every movement coming from Krsna's plane originates from the central will to satisfy Him. The whole *Svarupa-sakti* cannot be taken under any law; it is sweet will. *Yogamaya,* or *Svarupa-sakti,* gives the inspiration for one to be captured by the higher inner potency of Goloka and Vaikuntha, and in that way to become utilized for the purpose of the Centre. In this mundane plane inspiration draws us towards different stages of enjoying spirit. That vibration comes from innumerable local centres of local interest. Also in the attraction to the Centre there are many stages, but that vibration is from the Narayana Centre, the Rama Centre, the Krsna Centre—all in consonance with the main Centre. In Vaikuntha there are different types of *rasa* and inspiration than in Goloka, and the residents act accordingly. There are also different specific centres of interest, *dasya, sakhya, vatsalya,* and *madhura,* but all are for the satisfaction of the Absolute.

In this mundane plane we also find different centres but almost all are meant for local interest. All the different vibrations come to clash for different interests which are, on the whole, all of separate enjoyment. This is found in the material plane all the way up to Satyaloka, heaven. Above that are Viraja and Brahmaloka from where no traceable vibration originates. Then again from Sivaloka onwards some vibration originates, but that is of service. That vibration is of different stages, but all are of Centre-carrying interest.

Here in this mundane universe those who come from the higher region always try to connect with the Centre. Some are able to escape from local interest and realize such a position. Although they may not be cent-per-cent converted, they may sometimes be used as agents of that world according to the wish of that higher plane. As much as they are inclined towards that central interest, they are utilized by the higher office.

Devotee: So one might be inspired from the higher plane to describe Krsna consciousness according to time and place?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: It may be so. If he is so qualified, reliable and pure that he can catch and transmit the will from above, he may be selected as an agent to reveal the truth of that land.

Devotee: But it is a rare thing?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Rare, of course. When Mahaprabhu was in Puri, He utilized one of His devotees, Nrsimhananda, as the mediator. It is mentioned in *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta* that Nrsimhananda while here in Nabadwip would lose his senses and, being inspired by Mahaprabhu, would talk here about Him. Nrsimhananda would receive inspiration as though hypnotized from afar. A hypnotist can normally only hypnotize within the range of his senses, but it may sometimes be possible also that from afar one can inspire, hypnotize and engage another as a medium. It is mentioned that Mahaprabhu did just that to Nrsimhananda Brahmachari who was able to tell what Mahaprabhu was doing. He also foretold Mahaprabhu's imminent arrival in Nabadwip as well as many other things. It was all true and verified in due course of time. Such things are possible.

In this modern age it is possible to communicate over long distances physically by means of radios, telephones, etc., but in earlier days this was done mentally. Mental and psychic powers previously were more developed by the *yogis* and devotees. Now physically such transmission is being achieved by scientific knowledge and it is generally easy for people at large to believe. But in previous days such communication was psychic, so ordinary people could not know how it was being done. We also tend to think it is impossible even though now it is physically possible by telephone to talk with others in America and London. Such modern communication is also a miracle. Previously the development was such that the *yogis* who may not even be devotees or connected in their practice with God, were able to develop such psychic powers that they were able to communicate on the mental plane.

It has also been recognized in the writings of the Western philosophers that it is quite possible and believable that Indian *yogis* can cure diseases from a distant place. In those writings the opinion has been given that by creating a magnetic force a disease may be cured, and also it has been considered that previously some Indian *yogis* may have had the mental power to do so. And all the big Indian *yogis* themselves say, and stand as proof, that so many wonderful things can be achieved only by improving psychic powers. They used to communicate with even the demigods. They were also able to go to the demigods, but only mentally, and similarly the demigods would come here. That transaction was not imaginary but was reliable and scientific.

Devotee: There is a great interest in the West in this subtle science of parapsychology.

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Yes. Several years ago some Russians came here to enquire amongst the Indian *yogis:* "How can we understand or read things that are far away such as on the moon, sun, mars, jupiter etc.?" They had heard that the ancient *yogis of* India could do such things.

The speed of the mind is considered to be most rapid, faster even than electricity or light. This appealed to the Russians who wanted to know whether any *yogis* were available who could help fulfil their material purpose: "We have sent a rocket towards Jupiter and wish to know whether by mental energy it is possible to receive information from there very quickly."

In India there is recognition that only the mind, and no other material thing, can be quicker than the velocity of light or the electron. *Manogati,* mind can hear. Despite the great distance, a far off place can be remembered within a second. The mind is the quickest conveyance, the quickest medium. So those Russian gentlemen came here with the enquiry: "We have come with some material object, to see if we can utilize the speed of mind in the case of scientific research." But finally they said, "No, we could not do it. We failed. It appears that we are unable now to meet a man with such capacity here in India."

Once I was delivering a lecture to an assembly of advocates. They put a question to me, "How is it that a few years ago we had higher connection with the demigods and Satyaloka but now we seem to have become disconnected? No god comes here although only a few years ago such things took place. Devarsi Narada and so many gods no longer come here, and we cannot go to them. Even in the time of the *Mahabharata,* gods used to freely come here, and Arjuna and others used to go there to heaven. How has this come about?"

In reply I explained: "The psychic powers were very much improved at that time. The power to communicate subtlely was very developed scientifically, but now we have lost that capacity."

I gave an example. Consider the present situation: the scientific civilization has created so many wonders such as aeroplanes, buses and rockets, but the whole world is afraid of atomic war, and if that should happen then everything may be ruined. The whole present civilization would be destroyed, but some books may be scattered here and there. In those books there is much mentioned about the present-day scientific advancement, so the later generations will read that there used to be aeroplanes, buses and so many things. But after the nuclear war those future generations of crippled persons will not be able to understand that such things really existed. They will consider, "What is written in these books is all false, all imagination." They will say that the scientific improvements were all imagination. Without any aeroplanes, rockets, etc. having remained, they will think, "All is bogus!"

Our present situation is similar: the extensive development of the mental powers that was cultured in earlier days is now no more. We have deviated from that previous position, so even if Devarsi Narada would come, we would not be able to see him. If Devarsi Narada comes here he will not come with a physical body but with his astral body. Our minds are not sufficiently developed to be able to detect that, but if they were, we would be able to see:

"Oh! Devarsi Narada has come." The impression in the mind's eye would be able to detect when such as Devarsi, Vyasadeva, Mahaprabhu or Nityananda Prabhu would come here. But that capacity has been blocked in the present age, rather this is the age where with a microscope we can scrutinize an insect or see a virus. This is the age now!

Devotee: Many years ago when Srila Swami Maharaj was in the West, a lecture programme was arranged but hardly anyone attended. The devotees apologized but Srila Swami Maharaj said, "Well, Narada Muni, Lord Brahma and many others came—I could detect that, but you were unable to see."

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Just as when Sukadeva delivered *Srimad-Bhagavatam,* his Gurus—Narada, Vyasadeva, Atri, Vasistha and others—all came there, similarly Srila Swami Maharaj went to the West with so much earnestness to preach the doctrine of Love Divine, so his Gurus went there to see how He was getting on. It is not impossible.

naham vasami vaikunthe, yoginam hrdayesu va mad baktah yatra gayanti, tatra tisthami narada

The Lord Himself says, "O, Narada, wherever My devotees sing my praises I cannot but be present there."

"Naham vasami vaikunthe— I do not live in the transcendental plane; *yoginam hrdayesu va—* nor in the heart of a *yogi; mad bhaktah yatra gayanti—* but wherever My devotees sing with most earnest heart; *tatra tisthami—* I present Myself there. I take My seat and hear their hearty song. Their singing and chanting carries Me from the heart of the *yogi* and even from the throne of My Vaikuntha. I run towards the place where the devotees chant with hearty devotion about Me: that is what really attracts Me most." Narayana Himself says this, therefore it is so that Narayana and His higher devotees come to attend such assemblies.

Devotee: Can mental powers still be developed or is it no longer possible due to the influence of *kali-yuga,* the age of quarrel?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: It may be possible but devotees do not like to waste their time in such affairs—they have no time to lose. They do not care to cultivate any form of mystic *yoga,* rather their concentration is on service.

There is a story about a devotee who was very busily engaged and absorbed in the service of his Gurudeva. By his service he satisfied the Lord who came in disguise and said, "Dear devotee, I am satisfied with your services. Come, I shall take you to Vaikuntha."

The devotee replied, "No, no. I have no time. My Guru Maharaj has entrusted me with this service, so I must attend to it. I have no time to go to Vaikuntha with You." He had such attention towards his service that he could not find time even to attend to the call to go to Vaikuntha.

We are to concentrate on our duty given by Gurudeva, and shall have no time to spare to go to Vaikuntha to fulfil our curiosity. Such sort of exclusive attention is laudable and necessary for the devotee. If the master says to his servant, "You have laboured a long time, now you are tired. Come and take your food." The dutiful servant may reply, "No, no, my Master, I have no time. I must finish this and then I shall go to take food." Such dealings are not impossible. Similarly a faithful worker on being called by his master to stop work and take rest may reply, "No, no I have no time to take rest now." I shall finish this, then I shall take rest." This is responsibility in service.

Another example is found in the service of Mother Yasoda. She was boiling milk for young Krsna, Gopal. He was engaged in sucking Mother Yasoda's breast while nearby some milk was being heated in a pot. Suddenly the milk came to the boil and overflowed into the fire. Immediately Yasoda forcibly took Gopal from her lap and went to take care of the milk.

Naturally, Krsna became dissatisfied to be snatched away from His Mother's breast. So it may apparently seem that Mother Yasoda committing an error: that she interrupted Krsna's immediate satisfaction of sucking her breast by forcibly putting him to one side to go to save the overflowing milk, which may or may not be going to be directly utilized for Him. But this is an extreme example to show how much care and attention must be paid to save and protect the materials to be used in the service of Krsna—even if that should make Him dissatisfied for the time being.

Everything is meant for Krsna, so we must preserve and take care of everything. "For the time being Krsna may be a little dissatisfied, but what does it matter? I need to look after His service materials." That should be our tendency and it is a very fine, very subtle thing to detect and understand. What is the underlying tendency? We must have the mood that everything belongs to Krsna, and at the cost of the present, the future must be kept up: "At present we may suffer, but we must still store for our future." When this sort of tendency is in the interest of Krsna, it is to be appreciated. So we are to engage in *jnana-sunya-bhakti*— service with no mood of curiosity. It is not that we shall want to be a big word-juggler, *yogi, jnani.* or any type of 'big' person. But

we shall feel satisfied if we have the chance to lead even a half-educated forest life, but as humble servants of the Gopis.

Such humility, and not grandeur, satisfies Krsna most. Grandeur may be adored in Vaikuntha, but it is ignored in Vrndavana Dham. The Vrndavana Pastimes are simple, plain and ordinary: neither high nor low—but a golden average. The degree of meanness can be infinite. The degree of nobleness and grandness can also be infinite. But the middle point, we may say, is the golden mean. Love is there. Love does not want to see into the future, but only the present—the concentrated present. Love. For love we may risk the whole future and may not care at all about the past. "Act. Act in the living present." Grandness and reverence are not very suitable for love. We are to think that a plain life is the highest position for the transaction of love whereas grandeur disturbs us in our transaction of true love.

Chapter 6

Humility in Service

Devotee: Does Lord Balarama expand Himself into the form of the Dham? Is Vaikuntha-Dham an expansion of Lord Balarama?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: It is Lord Balarama's representation in the form of Sankarsana. Lord Balarama Himself is in Goloka, and his *Vaibhava,* extended or delegated Self, is in Vaikuntha.

Devotee: And He Himself expands into Goloka Dham?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Yes, Goloka Vrndavana is all His expansion, but there He is alwavs active through His expansion as the 'underground' *sandhini,* unifying, potency; whereas His *madhura-rasa is* passive. In Goloka, Radharani's *Vaibhava* is having full play, and Balarama's potency is there passively as Yogamaya. Balarama and Yogamaya are of a similar function: both of them combined are conducting the arrangements of the stage for Krsna's Pastimes.

Devotee: Maharaj, what is the position of Subhadra?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Her position is not in Vrndavana, but in Dvaraka. The Subhadra in Jagannatha-Dham is *Arjuna-patni,* the wife of Arjuna, and sister of Krsna. She is within Dvaraka-lila and has nothing to do with Vrndavana. Besides this there is another Subhadra who is one among the many *sakhis* of Radharani in Vrndavana. She is called Bhadra or Subhadra.

Devotee: Is it Dvaraka-Subhadra who is also sometimes referred to as Yogamaya?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: No. At the time when I was composing *Sri-Sri Prapanna-jivanamrtam* I was faced with the position of having to think very deeply on this point: "What is the relation between Baladeva and Yogamaya?" Then, although I did not find it anywhere in the Scriptures, I discovered within myself that Baladeva must be the Master of Yogamaya. That is, after analysing the spiritual environment of Their Pastimes, I came to the conclusion that They must have some connection. They are both making arrangements for Krsna-lila, so Their relationship must be very intimate: Yogamaya must be in the position of the wife of Balarama. This conclusion came to me, and then later on I found that Jiva Goswami had also expressed such opinion that Yogamaya and Baladeva are very close and similar, and also Vrndadevi's nature and conduct is of very similar nature to Them in this respect. Yogamaya is in the inner circle—the *sakti* position—and Balarama is in the outer or 'male' circle—the second layer. But in the centre is only Krsna feeling His own ecstasy: *sukha-rupa krsna kare sukha asvadana (Chaitanya charitamrita, Madhya 8.158).*

When extension begins, we find that Balarama and Yogamaya make arrangements for that transaction of Krsna where *rasamrta-murtti,* Krsna the embodiment of all rasas, tastes Himself. *Rasa is* tasting Himself. It is different in the case of the mundane *rasa,* where the soul is the subject and the *'rasa'* is an object to be 'enjoyed' by him; but here, *rasa* is Himself the Highest Subject, and He is tasting Himself— *sukha-rupa krsna kare sukha asvadana.*

He then gradually extends Himself and so we find Baladeva who is a facsimile of Krsna. But because in the science of *rasa,* Baladev's direct approach to *madhura-rasa* is not admissible. He extends Himself as a special potency, Yogamaya, and goes to perform in that *madhura-rasa.*

Another representation or delegation of Baladeva is Ananga Manjari, the younger sister of Srimati Radharani. It is found that Baladeva as Ananga Manjari participates there in the service of Radharani, whereas the external management is in the hands of Yogamaya. Ananga Manjari is the manifestation of Baladeva through whom He is represented in *madhura-rasa.* The science of *rasa* does not allow Baladeva to enter there with His own *abhimana*— mood—, therefore, we are told. He has to go there as Ananga Manjari. The laws of *rasa* are of such fine importance.
The extensive management is the department of the Yogamaya potency, but that is in a second-hand position. The first position is that of Krsna, and in a secondary position, helping Krsna-lila from outside, is Yogamaya.

Devotee: Didn't Balarama return to Vrndavana and perform the *Rasa-liIa* with the Gopis?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Yes, but that was with a separate group of Gopis. The interpretation and inner understanding of the Goswamis is that Balaram performed the *Rasa-lila* externally, but within His heart He was making *Rasa-lila* of Krsna. His position and personality is such: He is faithfully dedicated wholesale to the cent-per-cent satisfaction of the Centre. His very constitutional position is such that He cannot do otherwise. That is His intrinsic nature: to put everything towards the satisfaction of Krsna. So the key for service to the Master, Krsna Himself, is in His hand. And that Master is an autocrat! But He says, "Don't be jealous of Me. I am your friend. You are all My own, so don't be afraid.

bhoktaram yajna-tapasam, sarvva-loka-mahesvaram
suhrdam sarvva-bhutanam, jnatva mam santim rcchati
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 5.29)

"Your anxiety will subside when you come to understand that everything is in My hands and that I am not your enemy, rather I am your friend. I have a friendly relationship with you all. I am all-in-all, but I am your well-wisher and friend. When you come to realize this you will be in real peace, otherwise you will always have worry without end."

Our anxiety will end only when we shall see, "My own interest is fully represented in the Cause, in He who controls the whole. He must give me favourable consideration as He is my friend, and so there can be no fear of any misdeed or injustice." Only then can we find peace within our heart.

Bhoktaram yajna-tapasam, sarvva-loka-mahesvaram— the great Master .of all that we can conceive is the recipient of everything. *Bhoktaram yajna-tapasam*— everything, to the farthing, goes only to Him. *Siihrdam sarvva-bhutanam*— and He is friendly to me. He is friendly not only to me, but-the real interest of everyone is represented in His consideration. And, *jnatva mam santim rcchati*— only the person who realizes, "My interest is assured in the highest quarter of management," can attain real peace of heart. He will feel, "Yes, I have no worry, no anxiety."

In the Lila, however, we find so many kinds of anxiety and worry, but that is something else. It should not be equated with the life of this plane, rather it comes under another category:

bahye visa-jvala haya, bhitare ananda-maya
krsna-premara adbhuta carita
(Sri Caitanya-caritdmrta, Madhya 2.50)

This means that union-in-separation is the highest form of union. It cannot be attacked or challenged by any circumstances. It appears to be very painful, but internally the position is one of greater intensity of ecstasy. The real gist of the whole meaning of the study of this higher subject is this, and we are to understand and follow it with particular attention and intelligence.

The real fact is that this is only intelligible by faith, *sraddha. Buddhi-grahyam atindriyam*— no precedents will come to 'prove' such things; it has no other verification. Faith alone can enter that domain. It is an infinite thing but we are tiny people, so what capacity does our faith have? Even in this universe there is so much which seems far beyond the stretch of our faith. Our faith is in such tiny measure when compared with the Infinite, so how much can we boast to have in relation to Him? Therefore why should we be so miserly in our faith? To be miserly will be suicidal. Faith will come first, then research will follow. In this world also, it is the same: the intuition, the theory or idea of a thing comes first and research follows. So unbridled faith must be allowed to have ifs free movement there.

Devotee: There is a verse by Srila Prabodhananda Saraswati:

vancito 'smi vancito 'smi, vancito 'smi na samsayah
visvam gaura-rase magnam, sparso 'pi mama nabhavat

"Deceived, deceived, no doubt, deceived am I! The whole universe became flooded with love of *Sri* Gauranga, but alas, my fate was not to get even the slightest touch of it."

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: That is a clear thing and it expresses the very nature of the devotee. That is, as much conception of the infinite as one has, he must feel within himself that he is insignificant to the same degree. It is the infinite conception from the view of relativity. It is a question of relativity. When you can see a bigger thing then relatively you cannot but think that you are very infinitesimal. When you look at a great thing, in comparison with that you are the smallest. Do you concede this? When you see the ocean you can perceive how tiny you are in relation to that great magnitude of water. In comparison you are very insignificant, is it not? So apply that principle in this instance also. One who looks at a great thing, whether in size, or knowledge or love, when standing at the verge of a great thing, from the consideration of relativity he shall think, "I am very poor and very low."

Purisera kita haite muni se laghistha: Srila Krsnadasa Kaviraja Goswami says of himself, "I am so mean, lower even than the worm in stool." When one has seen such pure and higher things, in comparison with that he must have such feelings. Mahaprabhu Himself says, "I am as insignificant as an insect but still I continue my life. My life is like an insect's."

na prema-gandho 'sti darapi me harau
krandami saubhagya-bharam prakasitum
vamsi-vilasy-anana-lokanam vina
vibharmmi yat prana-patangakan vrtha
(Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, Madhya 2.45)

"Such a pure and merciful ocean of love I see spread before Me but I am so unqualified that I do not receive even a drop of it. Why? Because I am a hypocrite. I really do not want it, so I don't deserve it. I don't want it, and so My life is unfulfilled. I have come near such a vast and beautiful thing but I am not allowed to even touch or receive a drop of it. I am so low, so unqualified. Why? Because I am a hypocrite. But still I think I am great, that I have importance, *pratistha.* Despite all of this I cannot leave my vanity, my false vanity. I want to display that I have some great achievement of *Krsna-prema* and therefore I shed tears. But these tears are not real, for still I am addicted to My lower self, I am self-centred. My self-centredness has not been dissolved. I am a seeker of My own fame, so I am not being allowed to partake of that ocean of nectar."

So, seeing such ocean of nectar one must gradually come to see himself as the meanest of the mean. As much as one comes in connection and consciousness of the higher reality then relatively he is compelled to think himself to be the meanest of the mean. That is the truth. That is the law of nature.
Therefore devotees of the higher order are seen always to say, "Everyone has the chance but not I. I cannot avail myself of this ocean."
Narottama dasa Thakur said, "Jagai and Madhai were such great culprits but they were released and received the nectar, but it seems that only I, Narottama, am barred and cannot touch it."

It is the nature of one who appreciates the highest that he will think himself to be in the lower position. We find this in the practices and sayings of the great men. It is a question of *trnad api sumcena, taror api sahisnuna,* and this is a necessary qualification of a devotee. We must have that sort of qualification, that sort of heart. That must not be an artificial thing but if we are not ready to think ourselves lower,, we cannot come in connection with the higher.

trnad api sunicena, taror api sahisnuna
amanina manadena, kirttaniyah sada harih

Your attitude towards the search will be such that you are almost unfit to search for such a goal, yet you sincerely want to begin your new life. To feel you are so unqualified is the qualification for the finite to approach the Infinite. If you think that you are something, that is a disqualification in your search for the Infinite.

With humility you are to take the Name of the Lord, that Divine Sound. But the process is that you must be mindful of this necessity of humility otherwise the search will be in vain and your attempt will be lost. So what will be the proper attitude? *Trnad api sunicena*— you are to think yourself to be the meanest of the mean and the humblest of the humble. Sincerely you must feel that way. *Taror api sahisnu*— your forbearance must not have any limit. You must not feel, "So many days, so many ages I have passed in this search but I haven't reached there yet—I shall give up." Be sure that you have come to search for the Infinite. So there is no time limit and no room for any vanity that you shall think yourself to be master of that higher realm, for that is a

disqualification and must be given up from the beginning. *Amanina manadena—your* highest enemy is your self-seeking nature: to think that you have some standing, some greatness in you. That sort of vanity must be abandoned. *Amanina*— you must never seek any honour for yourself: no reward. *Manadena*— at the same time you must be modest in your dealings with all others, then your *amanina* will be genuine. If you do not like to give the honour to others then your own self-seeking will be present and traceable. But when you can give honour to others without wanting any for yourself, you will be qualified to search for Govindam, for the Centre, the Infinite, the Absolute. You are a qualified student if you can give up all these bad and unfavourable prejudices. If you come to search after the Absolute then you must have such qualifications otherwise you will fail. So we find that the great devotees always condemn themselves to the extreme, beyond what we can conceive even for ordinary persons.

Kaviraj Goswami, who is the giver of the highest conception of the truth says,

jagai madhai haite muni se papistha purisera kita
haite muni se laghistha mora nama sune yei
tara punya ksaya mora nama laya yei tara papa haya
(Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, Adi 5.205,206)

"I am worse than a worm in stool. When Jagai and Madhai came in the relativity of Mahaprabhu they were considered to be the worst sinners, but I am worse than them. My sins are so dirty no one can even dream such things. I am such a great sinner that whoever will hear about me, dirt and sin will enter him through his coming in contact with my name. Sin will enter one who once hears my name, and his good qualities will vanish." Kaviraj Goswami continues, *"I* am a person of the worst type, but the grace of Nityananda Prabhu possesses such a high degree of disinfection that He has given me so many things: He has taken me to Vrndavana and has given the relationship of Rupa, Raghunath and Govinda. There is no qualification in me but all is the grace of Nityananda Prabhu."

By this he wants to express his highest gratitude to Nityananda Prabhu: "It is shameful to speak about one's own life but still I do this. Why? If I do not do so then I shall be ungrateful to the grace and magnanimity of Nityananda Prabhu. So fallen am I but Nityananda Prabhu has given me all these things:Vrndavana, Rupa, Sanatan, Govinda, Mahaprabhu, Raghunath Dasa and so much else. It is all the gift of Nityananda Prabhu. It is His unconditional gift to this one with no qualification, and therefore I have mentioned: 'Yes I have such things.' If I do not say so then I shall be an offender to Nityananda Prabhu's grace, so I am compelled to confess that I am so sinful and fallen but by His grace I have received these things."

The conception and feelings of all the great devotees are of such type. Srila Prabhodananda Saraswati similarly expressed, "It is there. I can see and feel that it is there but I am deprived— *sparso 'pi mama nabhavat."*
Radharani Herself says, "Krsna is qualified in every way. I can't blame Him in any way at all, but still He is so cruel to us all. He left Vrndavana and so we are all feeling extreme pain, but I cannot accuse Him in any way. This is my *durddaiva-vilasa* ('Pastime of separation')"

This is union in separation and is a peculiar type of achievement. Externally there is suffering but internally there is transcendental ecstasy: *bahye visa-jvala haya, bhitare ananda-maya*

(Chaitanya charitamrita, Madhya 2.50). When one actually has the thing, he says, "No, I don't have it." This is the special characteristic of the Infinite. One who has it in his possession says, "No, I have nothing." This is because it is a statement from the negative to the Positive. And when he says, "I have it," then he has not! The negative cannot assert at all but can only attract. Assertion is only with the Positive.

So the negative can hanker, he can express his own reality in the negative characteristic. He can express his degree of want. The measurement of his position is according to his negative tendency: his necessity, his depth of attraction—not of gain. It is just the opposite to the general measurement of one's standing in this mundane world. The real measurement rs in the negative side: the depth of necessity and the depth of attraction, but not of gain. Only the Positive can assert His existence.

Devotee: This is beautiful!

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Yes. And it is because of your beautiful attraction to all these things that they are being drawn out.

Devotee: It is one thing for such great personalities as Kaviraj Goswami to make these statements. But for men like ourselves, we actually are like that!

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: That will be the standard to keep in front of us, the ideal as given by our Guru Maharaj. But we must not assume ourselves to be of the standing of Kaviraj Goswami—that is another type of wrong thinking also.
In his book *Caitanya Bhagavat,* Vrndavana Dasa Thakur tries his utmost to describe the greatness and magnanimity of Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu. Then he says, "In such a modest and broad way I am appealing to the people at large, I am touching and holding their feet and putting to them: 'Please turn and appreciate the magnanimity and great gift of Gaura-Nitai, it is for your benefit. Please accept this. No matter what class of sinner you are or what filthy position you are in, you please try to come and connect with Gaura-Nityananda. You will be blessed and all your hankering will be fulfilled. Do it, it will be for your benefit.' But, after so much fervent appeal to earnestly request you all to appreciate Gaura and Nityananda, if anyone still wants to criticize and blame Nityananda and Gaurariga then I want to kick his head!" This is also a peculiar sentiment that may come in the heart of a devotee. And how to explain it?

So many superficial critics have said "Kaviraj Goswami has appealed in such a modest way but this Vrndavana Dasa has such vanity! His vanity is so great. He is so proud that he wants to kick those who do not have faith in Gaura-Nityananda. His attitude is most impertinent." Before joining the Mission I had read such comments, but when I came to the Gaudiya Math I heard a particular interpretation from our Srila Prabhupada. He explained that by this statement Nityananda Prabhu has come to the relief of the most sinful and heinous. They have no other method to come to divinity, but Nityananda Prabhu has opened a way for them: they are being punished by His devotee and so Krsna's special attraction will be drawn towards them. Krsna's attraction will be there because apparently His child—His devotee—has done something wrong, so He will come to compensate for that. If punishment is given by His devotee to a member of the public, Krsna's special attention will be drawn to that man to compensate. He has tolerated and by way of compensation he will be benefited. Vrndavana Dasa has given them some punishment and

dishonour; they are mortified so they must be taken in and some special grace will come to them. So by this statement Vrndavana Dasa has, even to the worst accusers, opened the door to enter into Krsna-loka. We received that sort of interpretation from our Srila Prabhupada.

From the stand-point that there cannot be any filthy thing in the devotee, then by whatever they do, some connection will be established with Krsna. Ultimately a mother has no feeling of revenge to her child. When she chastises her child then he may cry, but the mother will again come and take him on her lap. So there is no permanent apathy, jealousy or any spirit of revenge, but rather any connection that comes in any way is only of compassionate temperament to draw him forwards. Of course that does not mean that willfully we should offend the devotee and try to get benefit thereby! That will be *aparadha.* It will be in the category of offence to think, *"I* will take the Name and the reaction for sinning will not affect me."

Chapter 7

Intelligently Aware

Devotee: What is the real meaning of the word *anartha?*

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: *Anartha* means 'separate interest.' Krsna consciousness is causeless, *nirguna,* it has no end. *Nirguna* means that the central flow and vibration of Krsna consciousness is eternal. That wave has no end. Any interest which is separate from Krsna consciousness is *anartha. 'Artha'* means 'necessity' and *'anartha'* is that which is not my necessity—that which is opposed to my necessity, being based on separate consciousness and interest.
So to get out of the trap of separate interest which is misleading us, and to learn how to read the Infinite, we are to identify with the universal flow, the universal wave. At present we are being carried away by different waves of separate-interest consciousness— *anartha,* it is not necessary for us. Our only necessity is to merge in the wave of the universal interest, which is for Itself, for Himself.

The Lord says:

aham hi sarvva-yajnanam, bhakta ca prabhur eva ca
(Bhagavad-gita, 9.24)

"I am the only enjoyer of all sacrifices, of all movement in this world. I am the only enjoyer, and everything belongs to Me unconditionally."

God's position is such. He is paramount. He is the highest harmonizing centre, and we must all submit cent-per-cent to Him. Any deviation from that is *anartha. Anartha* means 'meaningless,' it has no meaning. The only real meaning or purpose worthy to be served is the connection with the universal wave, the universal movement. Anything besides that is *anartha*— undesirable and unnecessary. The *anarthas* will serve no purpose. We are in connection with *anarthas,* undesirable things which won't serve any real purpose towards our cause. But the real cause of our life, and the whole satisfaction of our very existence will be found only in connection with the universal wave of the whole Absolute. That is Krsna consciousness. It is the most universal, fundamental wave, and we have to catch that. Our goal, our satisfaction and the very fulfillment of our life is only to be found there, in that layer, that plane, and not in the superficial plane of nationality interest, family interest, social service, etc.—for that is provincialism.

One section is busy with many local interests, and another section wishes to stop all activity. To stop one's own movement, to do away with one's own existence, is renunciation, *samadhi,* and is also suicidal. So we have to give up renunciation as well as enjoyment.
The tendency to do evil and also the tendency to go on strike, both are to be given up. In a nation, we may find so many workers doing some wrong, going against the principle of the law; but that is hooliganism and is bad. At the same time, to go on strike, refusing to work, is also bad. The good path is only to work for the interest of the country.

This we have to learn: from local interest we must go to the universal, the Absolute. We are not to have any local interest however extensive it may be. Whether self-centred, family-centred,

village-centred or society-centred as in humanitarianism, it is all only a part of the Infinite. Tins is the fact, and generally we are to try to understand things in such a way. The technical words like *anartha nivrtti, bhava, asakti,* all these are covered by this understanding.
Lord Krsna has recommended in *Srimad Bhagavad-gita* how one can conquer *kama,* lust, by regulating the senses. He advises us to become acquainted with the nature of the soul, then all the problems caused by *kaina* will be turned into ashes:

indriyani parany ahur
indriyebhyah param manah
manasas tu para buddhir
buddher yah paratas tu sah

evarm buddheh param buddhva
samstabhyatmanam atmana
jahi satrum maha-baho
kama-rupam durasadam
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 3.42,43)

Lust is not easily accessible, but is hidden. We cannot easily trace where he lives, but he comes suddenly and, after looting, disappears. But we are told here that really he lives in the intelligence, the mind and the senses. To conquer that lust we are to regulate the senses, but in order to do so we first have to analyse what the senses are and what is their position, and then, what is the position of the internal king of the senses, the mind. After that we are to analyse what is the intrinsic position of the *buddhi,* the faculty of reason, judgement and intelligence. Then, with the help of reason, we are to try to find out what is in the background of that faculty of reason, of judgement and of decision making.
In the background is a pencil-thin ray whose nature is diametrically opposite to the world of experience. In *Srimad-Bhagavatam* an example is given that in the niglit a cloud may cover the moon. Though the cloud obscures the moon, still the cloud can only be seen by the light of the moon.

na rarajodupaschana, svajyotsna bhasitairghanaih
aham matya bhasitaya svabhusa puruso jyatha

In this example the soul is likened to the moon and the *ahankara* is likened to cloud cover. The sense-consciousness, the mind and the intelligence have all combined to form a system, *ahankara,* which has covered the soul. But they are seen, and it is possible for them to act, only because there is light—the light of the soul, the moon. So by the help of our reason we must try to perceive what is above reason, and we shall come to see that it is the *atma,* the soul. In this way we may have some direct connection with the *atma,* or at least some conception, however vague, of its existence and nature. At that time our whole material aspiration will turn into trash and within ourselves we will be able to conquer all the charms of this world. The Lord's advice in *Srimad Bhagavad-gita* is to somehow or other try to obtain understanding of the true nature of our own *atma..* We are really of such a superior nature and hold a noble, dignified position in the higher plane; but lust and so many base things have come to entrap us.

Raso 'py asya, param drstva nivarttate (Bg. 2.59). By even slightly coming in contact with the dignified position of our own soul, all worldly charm will vanish; and even that will seem to be a negligible thing compared to the awakening of higher levels of realization, up to the Supersoul—Paramatma—then to Narayana and Krsna! There is so much ecstatic enjoyment on that side and it will be realized only when it will be revealed within us. Though to our present conception it is far away, still, that experiencer, that taster, is within us: it is the *jivatma.* And if we try to concentrate even for a second there, we will find what a dignified position the soul holds. We shall think, "Who are these thieves? The intellect, mind and senses are all thieves and plunderers. They are taking me into the land of misery as if through some intricate conspiracy." It will seem like that to us.

indriyani parany ahur, indriyebhyah param manah
(Bhagavad-gita, 2.42)

Our senses are superior in comparison to all the things we experience around us. Suppose we were devoid of all our senses of touch, sight, hearing and so on, then we would have no conception of anything external. The world would mean nothing to us.
Then again, the central figure of all the senses is the mind. Someone may call but we may find: "He was calling me? Oh, I was unconscious: I was unmindful and did not hear. I have my senses but because I was unmindful I did not hear or see him." So the mind is in the centre. And the mind has two functions, *sankalpa-vikalpa—"I* want this, I don't want that—I don't want that, I want this." This is mainly the function of the mind.

Then comes the *buddhi,* intelligence. From the mind we are to go up to the *buddhi,* the reason. What is it? Discrimination. "Oh, my mind wants that, but it will bring such a reaction, so don't go to do it." The *buddhi,* the intelligence or faculty of judgement will give the warning, "Don't go! Don't listen to what the mind says; don't obey him." That is the intelligence.
Then if going up from there, surpassing the intelligence, we search for what is next, what is above the intelligence, backing it and making the function of intelligence possible, we will be able to see, "Oh, this is my real self and everything else is an outside extension in the material world, it is all a material overcoating. I can leave it, and with only myself, my own *atma,* alone I can go up to somewhere higher. This present atmosphere is not at all necessary for me, rather it is harmful, a coating, a garment which has been thrust onto me in order that I come in connection with this bad environment." With this realization, with our soul proper we can go in a higher direction, towards Paramatma, Narayana and Krsna.

Chapter 8

Beyond the Yogi

Devotee: Maharaj, I read that in the dream state the living entity also sees. So, what is that medium by which one sees in a dream? What kind of 'eye' is that?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: The mental system, that is the subtle-body within, called *suksma-deha,* cannot only see; he has eyes, ears, the sense of touch as well as all the other senses. Everything that exists in the form of flesh and blood is also there in our subtle body; it is closer to our real self and is more perfect than this external body. Everyone has that mental system. There is a mental world with its own government where Yamaraj is the judge. Independent of the physical body, the mental body can live and move in different levels in that subtle region. Good and bad are there in degrees, but all within the jurisdiction of the three modes of nature within this *brahmanda,* this material universe.

Sri Ramanujacaryya says that dreams are not false; just as we have experiences in our waking life, we also live through many experiences in dreams. In our dreams we feel pain and pleasure, thereby many of our reactions are finished. By suffering in the physical life, the result of bad *karmma* finishes. By feeling pleasure, our *puny am,* merit, is exhausted. Similarly in a bad dream we feel some pain and as a result some of our previous bad *karmma* finishes; and in a good dream when we feel happiness and pleasure, some *punyam* resulting from our piety is finished. That kind of life is also 'real' in the mundane sense.

The higher planetary systems Bhuh, Bhuvah, Svar, Mahah, Jana, Tapah, Satya, are various stages within material existence, but where are they? They are not in the physical plane but in the mental plane, the world of mental experience. Devotee: So are the living entities there already living in their subtle bodies, not in gross bodies of flesh and blood? Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Yes. Even the trees and stones have their subtle bodies, but they are not awakened sufficiently. The degrees of awakenment are all different. Misconception under the modes of mundane nature *(guna-mayi)* extends, according to its degree, up to Satyaloka, the plane of Lord Brahma; and finally the negative side merges into Viraja and is finished.

Then the spiritual plane begins with Brahmaloka, the spiritual effulgence, and ascends though the levels of spiritual variegatedness from Sivaloka to Vaikuntha. Above that is Ayodhya, then Dvaraka, and finally Vrndavana in Goloka. So gradation extends everywhere up to Svayam Bhagavan in Radha-Kunda. There are the *Rasa-lila,* the Govarddhana-lila and the Pastimes at Radha-Kunda, and in all these the standard of measurement is according to the *rasa,* the *anandam:* the degree of ecstatic joy. Each individual country has its own currency such as dollars, pounds, rupees, roubles, yen, etc.; but the international standard is gold. Similarly *rasa* or *anandam* is the universal standard by which we are to measure what is high and what is low.

Devotee: Why don't the Gaudiya Vaisnavas use any *yoga* practices such as *yoga-asanas, pranayama,* etc. in their service to Krsna?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: The Gaudiya Vaisnavas discard any artificial things. God is with the heart and that is the important part. We are to appeal to the heart and have transaction with the

heart, and not that by manipulation of the natural forces we shall gain some mystic power and try to exert that on God. Is that a form of worship? For one who has a heart, the hearty transaction is the most natural. And that is service. Satisfaction is for the Lord so what is the value of trying to gain some power from elsewhere and by dint of that, to try to encroach upon Him? What is the result of doing *yoga*? It will give some power but what effect can that power have on Him? None. We are not to try to exert our energy upon Him, but the opposite is necessary. We are to consider that we are the most fallen of the fallen and the meanest of the mean. *"I* want Your grace. Please accept me as a slave, as Your meanest servant." This is the way to approach the higher and not that we are to gather some power and by dint of that power jump on that Superior Entity, for that is not the process of getting Him, of receiving His favour. Favour is favour!

The Lord is all-complete and all-perfect. If we want His favour we must approach keeping ourselves in the meanest position. We have no position. We are nowhere. We are wholesale dependent upon Him. This is our natural position, our constitutional position. We are wholly dependent upon Him. So any petition to Him must be with this temperament: "I want Your favour. Your grace. Please accept me. I am so heinous, so sinful, and the meanest of the mean. You are my best friend, but neglecting You I left and went somewhere else to search for my prospect, I was so mean. I am not only a sinner but I am a traitor, a treacherous man." In this way we are to go back to our highest and most affectionate friend.

What help will this *yoga* power do for me? He is above all seduction. Shall I think that with the power of *yoga* I shall influence Him to favour me? It is not possible for Him to be controlled in any way by yogic power; so *yoga* can give me no benefit. What will *yoga do* for me? He is all-independent, absolute. He is perfect in Himself. To try to exert other influences upon Him will have no effect rather that will anger Him. Instead we are to approach Him with some recommendation or with a guardian.

The Guru and Vaisnavas are our guardians. We are not to go to any external power of nature but to His agents, and ask them to plead for us. By *yoga* we can acquire some subtle power, but no power can work on Him against His sweet will. We must approach Him in the line of His sweet will and with those who have faith in His sweet will. Those who have faith in His sweet will are His devotees. Through them we must approach Him and not by any attempt through any other power, for that will give just the opposite result. If we want to know Him, it is futile! We cannot know Him by our attempts. Still, if we find such necessity, we shall pray, "Please make Yourself known to me," otherwise it is not necessary to waste our energy asking that He will reveal Himself. If we can leave the idea that we must know Him then that request becomes redundant. Rather our mood should be, "I want to satisfy You. I want to contribute something for Your satisfaction. Please accept me. You are full. You are perfect. You have no needs, but for my necessity please give me some sort of service." Service means in the line of satisfaction to Him, and that should be our attitude to approach Him. To approach a friend, an affectionate friend, so many mystic persons should not be called to help in our attempt.

yamadibhir yoga-pathaih, kama-lobha-hato muhuh
mukunda-sevaya yadvat, tathatmaddha nil samyati
(Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.6.35)

It may be possible for us to control our senses to a certain extent and for some time by the practice of *yoga,* but *yoga* cannot give the Absolute. That He is Absolute means He is above all. Absolute means that He is self-sufficient; He is not dependent on any other thing. *Yoga* can only help us to control our mental and physical anomalies or eccentricities, that too only for the time being, not for eternity. For the time being, lust, anger, greed, illusion, etc. *(kama, krodha, lobha, moha,* etc.) all may be brought under control but only for some temporary period. *Mukunda-sevaya*— but if we can engage ourselves in the service of Mukunda, then all disturbances will leave us once and for all. By finding the sweet taste in His service and company, all these so-called charming proposals will retire eternally. The charm for lust, the charm for anger or for greed, all these things will vanish altogether and won't come back again if only we can get the taste of serving the Lord, Mukunda.

naham vedair na tapasa, na danena na cejyaya
sakya evam-vidho drstavan asi yan mama
bhaktya tv ananyaya sakya,aham evam-vidho 'rjuna
jnatum drastum ca tattvena, pravestum ca parantapa
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 11.53,54)

"All other means fail. Only exclusive devotion can draw Me as you see Me here, Arjuna, but other things cannot lead to such a position. Temporary devotion also will not be sufficient, but what is necessary is permanent, exclusive devotion."

sarvva-dharmman parityajya, mam ekam saranam vraja
(Bhagavad-gita 18.66)

"Reject all else and only concentrate on My own Self for that is the only sort of devotion that can draw Me to the devotee. All else is futile and shameful. It is not that someone will come with hired persons to canvas Me. No! My agents are the best benefactors to you. They are searching to canvas persons in my favour. My agents are there and not for any business purpose. Their business is to do good to others, and with this idea so many agents are out to canvas for Me. Come through them and do not seek any recommendation from outside to use various means to try to force Me to favour you. That is not the proper path, but come to Me through My own agents. They have no aspiration to fulfil for themselves. They are all-given to My service and they are wandering trying to recruit persons, to benefit them.

So come through My agents, never otherwise. What is *yoga?* There is air and there are so many things but by controlling those do you think you will force JMe to come to you? I am the Absolute Autocrat. I don't care for anything else. I have no necessity to care for anything else. Not any force, any tactics, any cunning methods, any canvassing— nothing can influence Me. I am the Autocrat. And admitting the line of autocracy, try to come to Me. There are many demigods. They are making trade, but I am not amongst the commodities of their trading. None can make trade with Me. I am Absolute. I look only for devotion, exclusive devotion which is not formal, but natural, hearty and sincere. I look for that. I look for the heart and not for anything else— *bhava-grahi-janarddanah."*

patram puspam phalam toyam, yo me bhaktya prayacchati
tad aham bhakty-upahrtdm, asnami prayatatmanah

(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 9.26)

"Whatever My devotee offers to Me with sincere devotion, with sincere affection, I accept that. It does not matter whether it is a leaf, a flower, water, or anything else. Rich food or rich presentations are not necessary for Me, but what I want is the heart. I want sincerity and good faith. That is the highest requirement within Me."

There is a carefully written poem: "Oh Krsna, You have everything but only You do not have Your heart. Your heart has been stolen by the Gopis. You have everything except for Your heart and mind, they are not present in You for they have already been stolen by the Gopis. So You take my heart. You accept my mind. That is what is wanting in You, so please accept my heart and mind for Yourself. Your heart is missing, and that lias attracted my heart towards You, so please take it."

Chapter 9

The Foundation of Fortune

Devotee: What advice do you have for a devotee who is struggling along in his spiritual life, with no taste for Krsna consciousness?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: The first question is, struggling for what? 'Struggling' means struggling for something. A struggle presupposes something—its aim and object, its purpose. So, what is the aim of that struggle?
The German philosopher, Hegel, has given his philosophy called 'Ideal Realism.' He says that the ideal is not unreal or abstract imagination, but is real and all-important whereas the material body is nothing, rather it is only a servant to obey the dictation of the ideal. First there is the idea, then the body follows after it. So the ideal is real. This philosophy was put forward by Hegel.

So, 'struggle,' but struggle for what? A struggle may be of two types. First is the case where there is no taste for mundane enjoyment or renunciation but there is the desire for something unknown but at least above these two aims of life. If the person feels, "I can't tolerate the world of enjoyment, but also I dislike renunciation," then it is presupposed that he has some previously acquired *sukrti,* devotional credit, in the background. From his subconscious region will come the desire, the struggle for the company of a *sadhu,* a good agent, a good Master who can help Him. He will feel, "I am in a vacant position. I want some shelter. Who is there who can give me shelter? Who can save Me?" He may feel this sort of uneasiness—both dissatisfaction with the present, and also no sight of any positive engagement in the future. Yet he is unconsciously wanting something. To have this hankering for something positive presupposes some *sukrti.* This is one type of struggle.

Another is where there is no positive aim but only the aim to get out of the undesirable negative side. This desire for renunciation, to enter *samadhi* and be reduced to zero, to be finished, is like committing suicide. Just as when a person who cannot tolerate an unfavourable situation feels, "I cannot maintain my life any more," and so commits physical suicide, similarly renunciation is spiritual suicide. He feels, "I have no taste for this mundane world where there is always struggling amongst so many transient things. I have no prospect here." Feeling in this way he desires to enter into *samadhi.* This is like putting a living man into a tomb and then sealing it up. But if one is neither satisfied here in the temporary mundane world, nor wants to commit suicide and so efface his existence, then if he is even subconsciously hankering for some bright life, it means that *sukrti* is underground within the foundation of his subconsciousness. After that, some *sadhu* may come to visit him and give him some good news and instructions, "Do this, do that." He will have some tendency to follow that advice, and from that stage gradually his positive life begins.

There is an example in one Godbrother. When he was a boy of perhaps eighteen or so, he was dissatisfied with his existing life within his family household, so he went to Jagannatha Puri. Within his mind and from the bottom of his heart he wanted to find the association of a *sadhu* and join with him. At that time our Guru Maharaj was in Puri and one of his followers who was a very learned and clever man, met him and asked, "You are a very simple boy. Why have you come here?" "I have come in search of a *sadhu."*

"Oh, then come with me!" He took him to the camp of our Srila Prabhupada, and he joined. The acquisition from his former life was such that when he went to search for the positive spiritual path he easily found it; and so he joined, and joined for ever. He joined at the age of eighteen years and received *sannyasa* at twenty-eight. But before accepting *sannyasa,* someone had discouraged him saying, "You are so young and it is not sure how long you will live, so to take so much risk is not very wise!" He was also hesitating, and said, "Prabhupada has proposed this but I am hesitating and some of my friends are also misleading me."

I put it to Srila Prabhupada that he was hesitating. Prabhupada's response to him was, "You are frightened? Fear is in *this* world but you are going to take shelter in the *abhaya pada,* the fearless Holy Feet. Where is the fear? Don't have any apprehension. All fear is confined here in this plane, but you are going to take shelter above this area of fear.You want to enter into the fearless area, you are going to connect with the fearless world. Rather *this* world is the fearful place!" This came from his mouth. At last he accepted, and his *sannyasa* was given by Prabhupada in Puri. Every day in the morning for about a month he used to sing Srila Prabhpada's favourite *bhajana: Sri Rupa Manjari pada.* Practically, Prabhupada took him from Gaya to Puri only to hear it sung by his sweet voice. He sang:

radhapadankita dhama vrndavana yara nama taha yena asraya karila

Bhaktivinoda Thakur says, "What is Vrndavana? It is where there are the footprints of Sri Radhika. The criterion of Vrndavana is this: that it has on ifs head the footprints of Srimati Radharani." This is Bhaktivinoda Thakur's finding. So, if we want to see what is Vrndavana, and who is Radharani and who is Krsna, then we must take some note, some clue, and some impression from this. Bhaktivinoda Thakur says that Radharani is all-in-all:

radhapadankita dhama vrndavana yara nama taha yena asaya karila

"Where does the name 'Vrndavana' belong? Upon whose head the footprints of Radharani are borne, that is Vrndavana!" It is all-sweet! And there everything is sweet because the paraphernalia has all emanated from Her. Just as the entire screenplay for a film evolves from the brain of the director, who then himself may come to act his own part within it, similarly the entire paraphernalia of Vrndavana has come from Sri Radhika.
And from Sri Gaurahga we receive the combined gift of the grace of all these things. His gift is full of so much transcendental sweetness and is eternal in its play.

There is a bird called a *cataka* which always faces towards the sky praying for water. His nature is such that he can only swallow from above and cannot collect from the ground. We should be converted into that type of bird in our hankering temperament.for a divine drop of the divine sweetness, of the divine nectar which Mahaprabhu is distributing. Nectar, not honey, is the sweetest liquid of which we can ever conceive. Honey is mundane but nectar is something from above the mundane world. Honey is found here in this lower plane but nectar is only of our imagination. We have no experience of nectar in the mundane world, its character is transcendental. It is called *amrtam* or 'God's food.' There is nectar for the devotees, the godly, and poison for the demons.

Mahadeva, who gave indulgence to the demons, had to take poison generated from churning the Ocean of Milk. This appears to be a peculiar thing, but he took that poison on the order of Visnu, therefore through the connection of being engaged in Visnu's service he did not die, rather that poison became ornamental to him by making his throat blue. So sometimes Mahadeva puts a petition to Narayana, "You have given me this undesirable service only to deal with the culprits. What to do? It is Your will that I should be given charge of dealing with the demons, so sometimes I have to become friendly with them. But Your will is supreme." This is the position of Mahadeva who has the touch of the world above but who is the master of the whole of the misconceived area.

Devotee: What is the most direct and effective means to attain a taste of Krsna consciousness?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj:

satam prasangan mama virya-samvido bhavanti hrt-kama-rasayanah kathah taj-josaniid asv
apavarga-vartmani sraddha ratir bhaktir anukramisyati
(Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.25.25)

"One will rapidly progress on the path of liberation, and naturally will develop firm faith, attraction and devotion, when he cultivates the activity of engaging in discussions about My glorious Pastimes in the association of pure devotees. Such activities are very nourishing to the ear and heart." And,

krsna-bhakti-janma-mula haya 'sadhu-sanga' krsna-prema janme, tenho punar mukhya anga
(Sri *Caitanya-caritamrta. Madhya 22.83)*

"By associating with the *sadhus* and gaining their mercy one can get *Krsna-bhakti* right up to the stage of *Krsna-prema.* Furthermore the practitioners very life depends on the association of the *sadhus.* Without *sadhu-sanga* it is not possible to receive the real seeds of bhakti."

krsna-bhakti-rasa-bhavita matih kriyatam yadi
kuto 'pi labhyate tatra laulyam api mulyam ekalam
janma-koti-sukrtair na labhyate
(Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, Madhya 8.70)

"Pure devotional service to Krsna cannot be obtained by performing pious activities even for millions of births. It can be purchased only by paying one price: intense eagerness. Wherever it is available, one must purchase it immediately." And,

sadhu-sastra-krpaya yadi krsnonmukha haya sei jiva nistare, maya tahare chadaya
(Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya 20.120)

"If, by the blessings of a pure devotee and the Scripture, a *jiva-* soul becomes devoted to Krsna he naturally becomes liberated and Maya withdraws."

Do you have your answer?

Devotee: Yes. The most effective means of attaining Krsna consciousness is to associate with the exalted devotees of Lord Krsna— *sadhu-sanga.*

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: What does it mean to keep company and to have association with the *sadhus?* What have you understood to be *sanga?*

Devotee: *Pariprasnena sevaya.* (By relevant enquiry from a real Guru and by serving him.)

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Yes, but that is not up to the mark. *Sadhu-sanga* means it must be of this nature:

dadati pratigrhnati guhyam akhyati prccliati bhunkte bhojayate caiva sad-vidham priti laksanam (Sri Upadesamrta 4)

This is *sanga,* and in this way we can get the benefit of the association of a *sadhu.* Firstly, to give something to *sadhu for his* pleasure, and to take something from him as his *Prasadam— dadati pratigrhnati* Then, *guhyam akhyati prcchati,* whatever is concealed within our own heart, we are to divulge the whole of that to him; and we are to receive "his instruction. *Bhunkte bhojayate caiva—* we are to give the raw materials to him for his taking of *Prasadam,* and then we are to receive his remnants; *sadhu-sanga* means this.

Devotee: What is the process for one to test whether or not a *sadhu or* a Guru is genuine? Isn't it that one should first of all try to be sincere himself, then he will get a sincere Guru, and *sadhu-sanga?*

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: But from where will that sincerity come?

bhaktis tu bhagavad-bhaktasangena parijayate sat-sangah prapyate pumbhih sukrtaih purwa-sancitaih
(Brhan-ndradiya Purana)

Actually we can recognize a *sadhu* by *sukrti.* Apparently we can know him from the s *astra,* the Scriptures, because the *sastra* helps us to know who is a *sadhu,* and the *sadhu* gives us the interpretation of the *sastra. So sadhu* and s *astra* are interdependent, but the *sadhu* holds the more important position and the *sastra* has the secondary position. The living *sastra* is the *sadhu,* but to know who is Guru, who is *sadhu, we* are to consult the descriptions given about them in the Scriptures. The symptoms of the *sadhu,* both of the Guru as well as the disciple, have been written in the *Bhagavatam,* in the *Gita* and in the *Upanisads.* In the *Bhagavatam* we find:

tasmad gurum prapadyeta, jijnasuh sreyah uttamam
Sabde pare ca nisnatam, brahmany upasamasrayam
(Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.3.21)

"A person in search of the ultimate good should surrender to the Guru who knows well the Vedic Scriptures *(sabda-brahman)* and the Supreme Absolute Lord *(Parabrahman),* and for whom the mundane world holds no charm whatsoever." And the *Gita* says:

tad viddhi pranipatena, pariprasnena sevaya
upadeksyanti te jnanam, jnaninas tattva-darsinah
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 4.34)

"You will be able to attain all this transcendental knowledge by satisfying the enlightened Spiritual Master with prostrate obeisances, relevant enquiry and sincere service. Great souls who are most expert in scriptural knowledge and endowed with direct realization of the Supreme Absolute Truth will teach you that divine knowledge."

So in the *Upanisads,* in *Bhagavatam* and in *Bhagavad-gita* it is clearly mentioned what should be the symptom of a Guru and also what should be that of a disciple. If such a qualified disciple comes to a qualified Guru then the real transaction begins. Otherwise there may be so many bogus transactions; such black-marketing is going on in this world in the name of religion. But from the association of the real devotee comes devotion, *bhaktis tu bhagavad-bhakta-sangena parijayate.* And, *sat-sanga prapyate pumbhih, sukrtaih purwa-sancitaih*— one can come to a proper guide, a *sddhu,* as a result of his previous activity. *Sukrti is of* two kinds, *jnata* and *ajnata.*

Ajnata-sukrti is in the beginning when, unknown to him, he is utilized in trie service of the Lord through the *sadhu.* Suppose a man has built a *dharmmasala. So* many persons of different types come to stay there, but because they take advantage of the energy of the builder, the results of their actions will go to him. A dacoit may come and stay. A pilgrim may also come, and *a sadhu* also. If a dacoit will stay, then because he utilizes the energy of the owner of the *darmmasala,* the owner will have to take some bad reaction *(papa),* and will suffer for that. But if an honest man will stay there then the owner will get some *punya,* pious credit. In this way *papa* and *punya* will come to him, but after duly suffering or enjoying those fruits, they will be finished. However if a real *sadhu,* a devotee, will stay there and utilize the owner's energy, then that owner will acquire something permanent.

nehabhikrama-naso 'sti, pratyavayo na vidyate svalpam
apy asya dharmasya, trayate mahato bhayat
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 2.40)

"In this *bhakti-yoga* there is no loss of initial endeavour and there is no diminution of results. Even the slightest performance of this *bhakti-yoga* saves one from the great fear of birth and death in this material world."

Some permanent acquisition is deposited in his 'account,' and everything else, both the happiness resulting from accommodating a good, honest man in the worldly sense, as well as the suffering resulting from his accommodating a dacoit, will be finished. This sort of acquisition is permanent, and when it accumulates to a sufficient degree it will attract the man to do some sort of vague service to the *sadhus,* though not very consciously. That is also accumulated and when it reaches a certain stage the search for the truth will awaken within him. He will think, "For what are those *sadhus* living?" Then he will approach them, and if he goes in the proper mood as described in the Scriptures, the transaction will begin. The association, or connection with a real *sadhu* occurs by some underground activity known as *sukrti. Sukrti* is of two types:

ajnata and *jnata*— unconsciously acquired, and consciously acquired— *sat-sanga prapyate pumbhih, sukrtaih purvva-sancitaih.* Of this *sukrti* stage, Mahaprabhu says:

brahmanda bhramite kona bhagyavan
jiva guru-krsna-prasade paya bhakti-lata-bija
(Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, Madhya 19.151)

"Wandering throughout the material universe, the very fortunate living entity who receives the grace of Guru and Krsna receives the seed of the creeper of devotional service."

Sukrti is described by the word *bhagyavan,* good fortune. There are so many different types of *sadhus.* Among the *tyagis* there are so many different classes: the naked *nanga babas* and others. And among the theistic group also there are so many different sections like the Ramanujas, the Ramanandis, the Nimbarkas, the Vallabhis and the Gaudiya Vaisnavas. The Gaudiya Vaisnavas are the followers of Mahaprabhu. So even in the theistic section there is a graded classification, but it is through our *sukrti* that we shall be guided from the subconscious area to have connection with a *sadhu of* a particular section.

Chapter 10

Dictation of Sri Guru

Devotee: I know that at present I am a conditioned soul and am in Maya, but it is said that I have an eternal relationship with Krsna. So is it that I will only know that relationship when I become purified?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Yes, when the mist will be cleared the sun will shine in its full pristine glory. The mist of misunderstanding, in the form of *anyabhilasa, karmma, jnana, etc.* is a covering. As that covering is gradually dissolved, the internal relationship will appear.

Devotee: Is this eternal relationship always the same or can it be changed, such as from *vatsalya,* parental loving affection, to *madhura,* conjugal love, or from *madhura to dasya,* servitude?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: That will be known gradually. When the barrier, the cover, will be cleared, it will become revealed. That separating wall will gradually fade and as it becomes thinner and thinner the relationship will be conceived. It is a gradual process and at first will be vague. When we will come to the stage of *bhava-bhakti*— heart's Devotion—then it will come within our understanding somewhat, and gradually will become clearer.

There are various stages leading to *bhava: anartha-nivrtti, nistha, ruci, asakti,* then *bhava.* When devotion will reach the stage of *bhava,* then of course that eternal relationship will appear to a certain extent in a vague way. Then by a gradual process the definite identification, the particular quality of attraction one will feel for Krsna, will become clear. The attraction, the connection between the two, is intervened by the foreign propensities of *anyabhilasa, karmma, jfiana,* etc. As that barrier becomes thinner the nature of *rasa* as well as its depth and intensity will gradually be disclosed. It is not vague or a product of the imagination but it is more clear than the sun.

Devotee: When the Guru is here he engages us for something that Krsna wants. But in the absence of our Guru we may do some devotional service according to our own initiative. How do we know whether Krsna actually wants that particular activity from us?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Preferably we shall enquire from a *Siksa-Guru* but if none is available then we shall try to ask our internal Guru:

"In such a case what may be required of me? My Master, please reveal this." We shall have to make this appeal to our internal *Caitttya-Guru* and proceed accordingly. *Nahi kalyana-krt kascid durgatim tata gacchati (Bg. 6.40):* The sincere will have nothing about which to repent. He who is sincere to his own self will have such dictation as will help him to progress in his spiritual life. He will ask his Master within, "In such a case what should please my Gurudeva? I shall do that. As much as I can understand and feel I shall do." This sincere internal approach will be the last resort, but if any outside *Siksa-Gurus* are available we must consult with them.

Devotee: Sometimes *Siksa-Gurus* have differences of opinions.

Srila Sridhar Maharaj**:** In that case also we are to appeal to our own inner Guru, "Please suggest to me which advice I should follow? Please give me some internal suggestion otherwise what can I do?" If any difference of opinion should come from the outside guides, then in every case we are to make this appeal to our own conscience and follow that dictation from within. If possible we shall go to another recognized *Siksa-Guru* whom we can consult regarding these differences of opinion. But if there also we fail, then we must appeal to our internal Guru. There is no other alternative.

Devotee: I may ask the *Caittya-Guru,* the Guru within my heart, but how shall I know whether the response is coming from the Guru or only from my mind?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: That will be according to our own realized position. It may not be clear always, but we have no other alternative. Ultimately it is up to our inner judge to decide: "I came to my Gurudeva but my inner selection took me there. How did I leave my previous environment and come to my Gurudeva? My internal guide helped me to accept this person as Guru, so I cannot neglect that guide within me."
If my dictator within has taken me to a true Guru then he is not a traitor, so we can consult with him as a reliable friend.

Devotee: We are just neophyte devotees and so do not feel so pure as to be able to communicate with the *Caittya-Guru.*

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: It is so and therefore it will be better, safer, more helpful and easier if it is possible for us to secure a *Siksa-Guru.* But in an extreme case when that is not possible, then we are to appeal fervently to our own Guru within, the *Caittya-Guru.*
Also my own Divine Master may be living but if I am posted for duty in a far away place and some urgent decision is required then what shall I do? If an immediate decision is required and there is no time to receive my Master's order I may appeal to my inner Guru and I shall do that which I consider my Guru will be pleased to accept. I shall take up my duty and work with the assertion, "This will please my Gurudeva."

It is mentioned that one who has surrendered may not commit any offence. If you are surrendered and then appeal, "What am I to do, my Master? Please dictate to me," and do accordingly with sincerity, then if it is wrong also, you are not to be a party to that wrong because you did not consciously want to disobey the Guru—you tried your utmost to obey him cent-per-cent. But you are not a perfect person, still, from your position, as much as possible you have done and he will be satisfied with that. He is all-knowing. He is omniscient and will see, "He has tried his best."

So from our position we shall try our best and we will be rewarded accordingly. But we must be cautious that within us there may not be any insincerity, duplicity, or hypocrisy, for such things are self-suicidal. *Nahi kalyana-krt kascid durgatim tata gacchati (Bg.* 6.40): One who is sincerely trying for the good is never to be deceived. In whatever plane we may live we must be true to our own self, to our own conscience. To our own capacity we must be true to that plane, and when we rise higher we must consider and follow the faith of our new plane. We must not be insincere.

The dictation of Sri Guru is also similar in that he gives us some order according to our stage of spiritual development. To one who is in a lower stage he will give a particular order, to one in a higher stage he will give another order, and one higher still will be given yet another. He will give us orders according to our capacity, stage and nature; otherwise it will be impossible for us to progress. So according to our stage our duty should be attached and the results expected accordingly: a man who has the capacity to lift a weight of ten kilograms will not be instructed to lift a hundred.

Devotee: Sometimes we feel we have sincerity but later we realize that the sincerity we had was only superficial.

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Of course it may be possible in all cases to feel in this way. We are to be dealt with according to our stage. A boy should be given the standard of examination of a boy, not of a grown-up man. The questions in a boys' examination will be of a different standard than those for the adults. Gradually we will be taken to the higher standard. *Paroksa-vado vedo 'yam, balanam anusasanam (Bhagavatam, 11.3.44).* Just as a child is guided with some modified policy, similarly that sort of process has been adopted in dealing with ourselves.

Devotee: What should we do if sometimes the Guru should engage us in service above our capacity or ability to perform?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: If you think that the particular duty is beyond your capacity you will simply inform Gurudeva, "It is very difficult for me to do, and I do not think myself to be fit to efficiently discharge this sort of duty. If I tell you this doubt in my mind then you may wish to appoint some other service." But if he still says, "No, you are to do this," then you will do as best you can. If you have faith, considering him to be a real Guru then you can attempt to do that duty the best you can. You must consider that he has some super-motive, that some higher purpose will be served by engaging you in such activity.

Devotee: This Krsna consciousness is very, very beautiful. The cult of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is very sweet. Many people become attracted by Krsna and by Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu but why after some time do we find that some devotees lose their faith and go away?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: The first thing it depends on is the intensity of the *sukrti of* the devotee. And secondly is of course his free-will, his independence. The circumstances will also have their effect. Every action is the combined result of several factors. In *Srimad Bhagavad-gita* we find:

pancaitani maha-baho, karanani nibodha me
sankhye krtante proktani, siddhaye sarvva-karmmanam
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 18.13)

If we analyse any one event we will find that it is the combination of different forces from different quarters. So generally we can consider that the devotee's situation will depend on his previous initial merit, his present free-will, the environment and the mercy of the Lord. His free-will may cause him to commit *Vaisnava-aparadha.* And his previous merit, *sukrti,* will tend to keep him floating at the standard he previously acquired. By his free-will he may commit offences.

Also there is the free-will of the environment: the surrounding paraphernalia may grant him their mercy. There are many contributory factors.

Devotee: One of your Godbrothers told me that we are chanting Hare Rama in the *Mahamantra* but we are not supposed to pronounce 'Rama.' He said this is not *suddha,* pure, but we should say 'Ram.' Is this correct?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: 'Rama' is the true pronunciation, but if one says 'Ram' that does not mean it has no value—it will have some effect. The internal feeling underlying the sound is more important than the pronunciation. One may say Krsna, Kanai, or so many Names but it depends mainly on the *bhava,* the internal realization and feeling of the meaning of the word.
A child has a particular registered name. His mother may call him by a sound not fully according to that word's pronunciation, but that does not detract anything. Her affection is all in all. If a mother calls her child by a name, the name may not be pronounced in the perfectly correct way but the affection behind her calling his name is more valuable. So whether we say 'Rama' or 'Ram' may not be considered to be very important. The internal feeling with which the Name is taken is of much greater relevance.

Devotee: Sometimes we introduce the *Mahamantra* to new persons who have no idea or feeling about what or who is Rama and who is Krsna. How should they pronounce the name Rama?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Naturally they should chant 'Rama,' not 'Ram,' for that is the real pronunciation. If one pronounces it as 'Ram' that does not mean that the whole thing is spoiled, but 'Rama' is the grammatically correct pronunciation. Everything depends on the heart, the feeling and the sincere dedication. The highest importance is your earnestness of surrender. The child may call his father by the name 'Papa' or by any disfigured sound, but that is overlooked. The inner earnestness is always to be reckoned.

Devotee: While introducing the chanting process to many new persons we find that, because of some previous idea, some do not like the Hare Krsna *Mahamantra.* Can we tell them something else such as *Govinda jaya jaya...?*

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: That depends upon their stage of devotion, and that is why you find a particular section will chant *Govinda jaya jaya, Govinda jaya jaya*— but when asked to pronounce *Hare Krsna* they show no enthusiasm.

Devotee: Our Guru Maharaj has instructed us to chant a minimum of sixteen rounds daily. We are neophyte devotees and sometimes don't have so much attraction for chanting sixteen rounds. What can we do to become more attracted to chanting?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: The most important thing is to engage in service. Service of the Name and 'service of the Guru-Vaisnava are almost equal but still to a certain extent the basis must be the service of the Holy Name. Your Guru Maharaj introduced a daily minimum of sixteen rounds, and our Guru Maharaj instructed that we must chant at least four rounds per day on the *main,* the rosary. But this is a minor difference because our Guru Maharaj wanted that we be very busily engaged in the various services, but we must see that the *mala* does not fast. Some sort of service must be done to her by way of chanting at least four rounds daily. That was his

instruction but he also instructed that when one had the opportunity he could chant more and more.

The general standard set by Mahaprabhu was not only sixteen rounds, but four times sixteen which equals one lakh (100,000) Names. This is particularly so for one who is not within the body of an organized society and especially if he is living individually. When one is in an organized body he always has orders from the superiors to do this and that and thereby he engages in service; so the minimum quantity of chanting becomes a little relaxed from the sixty four rounds. But in the case of *grhasthas,* householders living separately from the main body of devotees, they especially should chant one lakh of Names daily. That is the general standard recommended by Mahaprabhu and by our Guru Maharaj. But when one is in an organized body and is required to do service running here and there, sometimes he is so busy that he can't even find any opportunity to sleep in the night; in that case he will try to chant at least four rounds. He is so busily engaged that within twenty-four hours he is not taking any rest but still he is required to chant a minimum of four rounds, whereas the general recommendation is that one who lives individually as a *grhastha* should chant at least one lakh of Names.

Mahaprabhu asked and advised us to purify ourselves with the help of Divine Sound. But. the sound should be proper transcendental Krsna consciousness; and in this *kali yuga,* the age of controversy, there will be only the minimum demand from us for our purification. The word *kali* comes from *kalah* meaning 'quarrel, controversy.' We are cautious about everything: everyone thinks, "No, I won't accept anything without some proof."

The mind is very suspicious, so we should take advantage of Divine Sound. Only the very minimum demand is necessary from us, yet the transformation which will occur in us will be very great. To have some *Sraddha,* faith, is the minimum demand, the minimum admission fee required of us: "If I do this, if I attend to this *sankirttana,* the congregational chanting of the Holy Names of God, then everything will be done." That underground faith must be there, and it will help us. That sincere cooperation from the heart is necessary for Krsna consciousness, and that can purify very quickly. To have faith that this process of Krsna consciousness will purify us, is the minimum demand. One must think, "If I attain this, everything will be done." If such a sort of generous, wide conviction is there within us along with a sincere mood of cooperation, then that can help us very quickly. That 'cooperation' means cooperation with the Divine Sound, the sound aspect of the Supreme. It is easily approachable for the beginners, and from that many other aspects of the Infinite will come to help us.

Beginning with the universal sound aspect, which is easily approachable, other aspects will follow in its retinue, gradually. But our faith must be heartfelt and sincere. "I am in difficulty, and this will give real relief to all my troubles. It will put an end to all the troubles I am experiencing now as well as any I am to experience in future. I am a bona fide student of searching my own real inner interest. I must be faithful to my own self. I feel that I am uneasy here in this world and I must search for some home comfort. If I am sincere I know that the way forward will be open to me, and that it is not difficult: it is there in the sound aspect of the Supreme. That Greatest Reality is Himself present also within the Divine Sound. This Divine Sound is not an imaginary thing Even though to my present conception it is coming and going appearing and disappearing, it is not a trifling, transient thine. It is the Reality."

And for a beginner, that ear experience is a great thing. Sound carries things from far away, and the ear can catch them. The eye-experience is not able to see so far.

Chapter 11

Distributing Divinity

Mahaprabhu has issued a general order, "Whomever you meet, talk with him only about Krsna."

yare dekha, tare kaha 'krsna'-upadesa amara ajnaya 'guru' hana tara ei desa

"Whomever you find, talk with him only about Krsna. In that case, I am your Guru." Mahaprabhu has given this most broad and wide advice. The underlying feeling is, "Do relief work. All are in danger, acute danger. So don't consider so many minor things but go on with relief work and connect all fully with Krsna. The jaw of death is devouring them—save them! Now they are in the human species, but after death they may be lost in some other species. So, while their heads are on the surface, try to hold them, otherwise they may dive deep into the inner current and you won't be able to see them. From the human species they may go down to another species and be lost waiting there. There are so many different layers, but when they are floating, their heads are seen above the water, catch them, save them, otherwise at the next moment they may go down under the water and they will be lost without trace. So wherever you find them, somehow connect them with Krsna. Try to give them *that* connection. It is so urgent: 'Take the Name Krsna - always! You can have no plea of, I am taking food, or, 'I am going to sleep.'"

Our Guru Maharaj wanted the continuous attempt. He said, "While taking food, or going to bed, doing anything or going anywhere, keep connection with Krsna. Only try to keep His connection." Our connection with Krsna is so urgent. What a valuable life that is, and where are we?—in the jaws of mortality! So, everyone needs to be saved. Save them. Do relief work. In this general activity no specific order is necessary. It is a general thing; it is common sense in the devotional school and by this process you will be helped yourself. You will be able to keep yourself from sinking just as by the movement of one's hands and feet one can keep himself floating on water—it is something like that. *Kirttana* will help you in that way. So try to practise Krsna consciousness, any time and every time, to anyone and everyone.

There is an article in which our Guru Maharaj addressed his disciples: *vipada uddharana bandhu-gana:* "You are my saviours. You are all saviours to me in my danger; in the real danger of my life." He addressed his disciples in such a way: "You are all my saviours. You have given me support. You have come to hear me, and so I have the chance of *kirttana, Krsna-kirttana. So* you have come to save me. You are supplying food to me, otherwise I would have died without engagement. In this eternal atmosphere we are helpless without the cultivation of Krsna consciousness. You have all come to give me engagement in *Krsna-kirttana* and so you have come to save me from my dangerous position."
He addressed his disciples in such a way. It is so deep, "You are all my friends, you have come to release me from my danger; to save me from my danger."

He saw his disciples in such a great way—and this is reality. So *Krsna-kirttana is* the only life-giving, life-saving thing in this world. Without Krsna consciousness the souls are going down deeper into the unknown quarter.

Srila Guru Maharij (to a devotee): You have returned here to the Math after taking the Name of Krsna throughout the world! *Krsna-kirttana* was so dear to our Guru Maharaj, and especially to carry Krsna consciousness to the West. His incarnation at this time was mainly meant for that—to take it to the Western civilization.

Devotee: In the countries where I preach, the law says that everybody has to have a job, therefore the devotees are all working. In addition to their regular work they also do *puja* and so on. Sometimes they say it is becoming 'mechanical'—their *puja, sadhana,* lectures, etc. are becoming mechanical. So their question is, how to keep everything in such a way that it is fresh?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: How can it be mechanical? 'Mechanical' will be that which is ordered by the government. Physically we are to observe that, but our inner tendency will be towards the worship. Then how can that be mechanical? That is real, and the mechanical thing will be the outer show which the government requires of us.
When Mahaprabhu began His *sankirttana* preaching mission, at that time the two brothers Rupa and Sanatana were engaged in the service of the king in Gauda-desa. They were very high scholars and studied the Scriptures. Sanatana found that the time for the *Yuga-avatara,* the Lord's incarnation for *kali-yuga to* preach *Nama-sankirttana* was drawing near. So he was alert: "Has that incarnation appeared? And where?" Then when he heard that in Nabadwip *Nama-sankirttana,* the preaching of the Holy Name, was already begun by Sri Chaitanyadeva as Gauranga, he could trace that the *Avatara,* the incarnation of the Lord, must have come there, and that Gauranga was that *Avatara.* Then he wrote a letter to Mahaprabhu: "We are fallen souls and are engaged in the management of this government which is anti-Hindu. We are engaged in such a position, and outwardly we are affected by this influence. So what will be our future?"

Mahaprabhu replied to them with a letter, in which he wrote:

para-vyasanim nan vyagrapi grha'karmmasu
tad evasvadayaty antar nava-sanga-rasayanam
(Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, Madhya 1.211)

"A married lady who has love and affection for another gentleman may be seen to be always engaged in her household activities but her heart always realizes, or tastes, the company of that person whom she loves. Though outwardly she is seen to be very busy with household work, at heart she's always enjoying the company of her beloved. (Similarly, outwardly you may be captured and may be seen to be busy in the association of the government's activities, but your heart is not there. It is searching something, and it is receiving the benefit of the association of that inner substance.)"

So others cannot capture our heart; they can control our physical activity, but whenever we shall do something in the form of worship, of *Harinama,* our heart will go there. So how can that be mechanical? The mechanical side will be the outer side; and the sincere side will be the inner. The man is inside. The man proper is not found in his forced activity. Generally also ordinary men do like that: they outwardly show their cooperation and show that they are not interfering with politics, but internally the heart cannot be captured by anyone. The devotee's heart will go towards the Lord.

Of course when great personages like Christ, Mohammed, or Sri Chaitanyadeva Himself come for the good of the public, they preach openly, thus causing disturbance to the existing order and there is some clash; they cross over that and are victorious. But as far as ordinary people are concerned, the government does not generally challenge them or interfere in their private affairs. But when preaching from a centre where there is the sort of inspiration, "You fight with the external circumstances and establish this particular creed and thereby save the people," in this case there will be some difficulty. There it will be necessary to fight with any anti-party. But for the private individual's practising life that is not necessary.

Devotee: In some countries the devotees are not allowed to preach. They are allowed to worship in their houses, but outside they are not allowed to preach, so what do you recommend for them so that they may advance in spiritual life?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: To do whatever is possible—to make the best of a bad bargain—that should be the policy. Whatever is possible to do, you should take that advantage inside the house. Later, if the Lord wishes, favourable circumstances will come and then you will push out. At present, you alone cannot fight with them in this respect, so as much as possible, you will do it inside. But if the Lord wishes for preaching there outside. He will give you favourable circumstances and then you can go out. Otherwise save yourself first, and do as much as possible within the circumstances with the policy of 'making the best of a bad bargain.' When the special will of the Lord will come to devour the whole and change the people's hearts wholesale, then the circumstances will be otherwise; but at present first save yourself, and then do as much as is possible to make progress, and be satisfied with that. Just fighting is not necessary, but to keep up the very life, that is necessary. The fire, the spark is there; when it will be in a favourable environment it will be transformed into a conflagration. The spark must be maintained.

Devotee: So, how can we maintain the fire?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: In your heart; and whomever you find to be favourable, you can spread it to them, but in a restricted way, not very boldly asserting or pushing onwards. Keeping within that limited boundary do as much as possible without inviting the outward clear fight. And don't enter into politics.

As much as possible, you must try. But that means to be prepared to risk everything, and to die, to be a martyr. But to actually fight is not necessary. As much as possible you will follow *yukta-vairagya,* the middle path. *Yukta-vairagya* means not a clear, external fight, but to go on, to maintain everything in a consonance, in harmony with the external circumstances. And whenever you get any chance to advance, capture it—in this way you should go on.
So, 'wait and see,' and do your duty. Don't rush ahead forcefully or hastily otherwise your energy will be wasted: the higher quality energy will be wasted in a lower class of fight. The higher quality substance will be wasted. Though actually it is not really wasted, but for the time being it will be checked. No energy used in service is wasted.

nehabhikrama-naso 'sti, pratyavayo na vidyate
svalpam apy asya dharmasya, trayate mahato bhayat
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 2.40)

"Even a small beginning in this devotional service cannot go in vain, nor can any loss be suffered. The most insignificant practice of such devotional service saves one from the all-devouring fear of repeated birth and death in this world."

Still, the best policy is not to invite any fight, but to approach in a mild way, ready to make the best of a bad bargain. Otherwise, if you go directly to attack, you will be killed or imprisoned. But that is also one type of policy! One may be imprisoned, but also because of one's incarceration the atmosphere may change. Or, if one is murdered like Christ, then some influence may also come out of such a life-sacrificing position. That also we find, but that is an extreme step.
We want the middle course. We will wait and see, and take any good chance to advance, but not waste our energy in the first fight. This is the policy. One who wants victory won't be very rash but he will be very diplomatic—sometimes coming back, sometimes making progress, and sometimes taking a firm stand. So, military force is not all, but the strategy and tactics have their position.

One kind of policy also is that the military may attack the enemy from another side. Similarly in your preaching duties you may try to make some progress where there is not so much restriction from the authorities. Then if those people should accept your preaching propositions they will become strong, and the opposition will be influenced from that direction. We won't go to attack from this side, but if it is more suitable to attack from the other side, or from the rear, then we can prepare our army there. So, instead of going immediately to capture a particular section, you may preach somewhere else within that region. The influence will gradually spread until it reaches the neighbours of that section and ultimately they themselves will be influenced a little later.

It is also not necessary that our attention for preaching be drawn specifically to a certain section. There are so many people to be helped. When I was in Madras some people came and said, "Oh, you do not help the diseased people and the poor. You do not attend any hospital or any deathbed, but if they die, to whom will you preach? What is your answer?"
I answered, "Suppose there is a famine and some food is given by the government. If I am distributing that to so many people all around who are begging food but one man runs away, should I stop my distribution and run after him? or, because there are so many people here, shall I continue distributing? There is no want of people to receive the distribution—there is a whole throng, so should I stop distributing?"

Similarly everywhere there are so many souls to receive our preaching. They are needy, and leaving them we shall not go to dogmatically seek a particular section and only run after them, for that has no value. Needy persons are everywhere—there is no dearth of people to receive what we have, even if it is only a little. You have the duty to distribute devotion to the public, but thereis no dearth of recipients. Everywhere on every side of you there is demand, so you can go on distributing where it is necessary and favourable—not that leaving a particular group who are demanding, you will select one particular place only and go there. Only if your energy is overflowing, then you can go. Otherwise there are so many places where you can distribute Krsna consciousness, so utilize yourself there—that is to make the best of a bad bargain. And if you find some evil influence, some anti-party coming to cause disturbance to your preaching of nectar, then you will oppose them but only as much as is possible within your power.

We are to follow the middle path, just as in the case of *vairagya,* renunciation, we follow *yukta-vairagya.* Too much renunciation will waste our energy, and too much indulgence is also a waste of energy, therefore we are advised to follow the middle path, and that is called *yukta-vairagya.*

naty asnatas tu yogo 'sti, na caikantam-anasnatah
na cati-svapna-silasya, jagrato naiva carjuna
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 6.16)

"Oh Arjuna, *yoga* practice is impossible for anyone who overeats, undereats, oversleeps, or undersleeps."

The middle path has been recommended: too much of anything is to be left aside. If one attempts to live without sleep or without food, that is bad; and too much food, or too much sleep is also bad. We are advised to accept the middle path, and that will be more progressive and fruitful. So to 'make the best of a bad bargain' should be the policy. We are not to specifically invite a fight, and also we are not to only avoid it. The middle course will always be helpful for us. We are not to lose our energy, to waste it only for fighting, but it is necessary for us to give the positive thing and engage our energy there. If we can give a thing to the left side, why should we be determined to go to the right side and thereby waste our energy? Our business will be to give, to distribute the nectar, and we shall have no stubbornness to distribute nectar on the right side only. If any opposition comes, we can go to the left side and distribute there.

Distribution of nectar and saving people is our object of life and not to concentrate on, or be biased towards, a particular group. Wherever and however we get the facility, by that way we shall go. If a particular route is considered to be dangerous, than we shall go by another, neither wasting our energy nor the opportunity.

So *yukta-vairagya,* the middle course, is to make the best of a bad bargain. It means neither inviting a fight nor avoiding it, but taking the middle course. According to our capacity we will be able to face the opposition. But merely love of opposing is not necessary. We should have no prejudice for anything. Unprejudiced we shall only engage in the positive line—in that way we shall move. We should live for the positive interest, and not for the love of any negative things such as, *"I* love to fight with the enemies." To fight with the enemies, that is one thing, and to distribute nectar to the public at large is another. In order to do that, you must first know the proper conception and all the circumstances yourself, and only then try to give that to others. No false representation will be helpful, so first be sure of your knowledge, then distribute it. 'Half-truth is more dangerous than a falsehood.'

In only twelve years Swami Maharaj did such a miracle. It is inconceivable. What he has done is more than a miracle. So, I say it is was not his power, but inspired by some higher agency he did it. That is also his credit, that he could invite the higher help. He had such great hankering for preaching—any time and every time.

What Mahaprabhu came here for, that is the best necessity of everyone. So any engagement for any purpose other than to preach the doctrine of Mahaprabhu is not only a waste of energy, but it is a loss for the whole population.-The fittest thing necessary for all time to come and for everyone is Krsna consciousness; Krsna's connection. To try to connect whoever you come across with Krsna is the highest benefit of everyone. And without that, whatever engagement we shall

do will not only be a loss of energy but disservice to the people by drawing their attention to some bogus enterprise—it is bad and injurious. So only give connection with Krsna, the Infinite Lover, the beloved Absolute. Try to give everyone connection with Him.

Chapter 12

Our Greatest Wealth

If I show myself to be a soldier but always try to remain within the fort then 1 am not a soldier. But still, to be a soldier for Mahaprabhu, to preach His mission we must be careful. "Before going to attend a seriously diseased patient, if we are not strong but are feeling some weakness, then we are to intimate, to our Master: "This is my situation and if you think it appropriate, for the time being you may change my field of service." But we also shall have to keep in mind that we will need to become sufficiently strong in order to be able to attend to that type of serious patient. If we are preachers, the patients may be prostitutes, dacoits or wealthy men but still we shall have to approach them for the service of Krsna, and we must be bold enough and healthy enough for that duty. At the same time we must not be trespassers and on the way take tilings that are meant for Krsna, for that will make us traitors—unfaithful servants.

kiba va karite pare, kama krodhe sadhakere
yadi haya sadhu-janara sanga

Narottama Dasa Thakur said, "If we have the favour of the great personages then what can such types of temptation do to us? They can't do anything. If we work under our guardian and he is very careful, very strong and very judicious then no temptation can do any harm to us." This attitude is the key to the success of life. Generally, according to our capacity we shall try to move in this way, and at the same time we shall keep in our mind that to attain to our highest position it is necessary to be able to deal with all the serious things, even the most serious, otherwise there will be some defect in us. Wholesale conversion must come within us that we are servitors and not masters. This is the case with fame also. Name and fame, *pratistha,* is the most subtle, most dangerous enemy. It is the highest enemy and at the same time it is the most subtle. *Pratistha,* to take name, fame and credit for one's own self without giving it to Gurudeva, is the greatest enemy there is and it is very difficult to detect.
Three things in particular are very dangerous for the devotees: *kanak, kamini and pratistha* — money, women and fame.

Devotee: How can we detect *pratistha* within ourselves?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: That comes with the development of internal perfection and our continuous thankfulness to Gurudeva. It is necessary to understand and feel that everything comes from above: "I have nothing. I have no position and therefore my present situation always depends on the mercy of my Gurudeva. It may be withdrawn from me at any moment. Whatever I may have is not a fixed thing in me. It is not as a matter of right but is only extended grace in me. The moment it is withdrawn I am nowhere. It is all Krsna's *svarupa-sakti.* I am *tatastha-sakti* and have no capital. I am working on the capital of my Master. I have no capital of my own." We must be able to remain on such a plane of thinking and realize that, "Without His help, without His grace, I am in darkness. My fate is dark. As long as He extends His grace in me I can see. If the light is withdrawn, the eye is helpless." We are to realize the position that it is not our birth-right. By our birth we are *tatastha-sakti,* marginal potency, and whatever we have found, it is the gracious extension of *svarupa-sakti* in us. Our Guru and the Vaisnavas are the proprietors. It is *their* wealth and property; it all belongs to them.

At the same time it never occurs that the Guru and Vaisnavas withdraw their grace from the faithful. Such cruel activity can never be seen, rather they are busy to extend their circle and they never withdraw; that is our solace, our consolation. But it is not a matter of right that we can make some demand. There must be no demand and no challenge. The challenging spirit towards the Vaisnavas must be eliminated for ever. We are living on their grace, their *Prasada.* Uddhava said to the Lord:

tvayopabhukta-srag-gandha-vaso' lankara-carccitah
ucchista-bhojino dasas, tava mayam jayema hi

"Adorned with the articles that have been offered to You, such as garlands, fragrant clothing, and ornaments, we. Your personal servitors who partake of Your holy remnants alone, will certainly be able to conquer Your illusory energy (Maya)." And Lord Krsna in *Gita.* said,

yajna-sistasinah santo, mucyante sarvva-kilbisaih
bhunjate te tv agham papa, ye pacanty atma-karanat
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 3.13)

"Saintly persons who partake of the remnants of sacrifice become liberated from all the sins arising from the five kinds of violence to living beings. But those who cook for their own consumption, those sinners eat only sin."
We are entitled only to taste the remnants left by the Vaisnavas. We are to accept those remnants and continue our lives in that way without any rights or demands. This is similar to *Aryyan sanskrti,* Indian custom. Hindu law gives no rights or position to the females. The whole right is with the men and nothing with the women, but by their affection and serving spirit the women hold the whole respect—the key to all respect. They have the respect of the son and the affection of the husband, and they enjoy like anything.

By the law of the society, externally no rights have been given to the mother, wife or daughter, yet the ladies hold a peculiar and very venerable position in the eyes of society.
Pita raksati kaumare, bhartta raksati yauvane. Here Manu explains that during early age the father will protect the females, during youth the husband will protect them, and in old age the son will protect them. Though externally having no rights, they draw respect from society more than a goddess does.

In a similar way the potency of Krsna, His servitors, hold such a position in relation to Him. They have no external right and do not care for any. They are His, but only through the power of affection and loving service they command the whole. The potency aspect of Krsna does not want any right, force or power, yet they have the subdemost power: the power of affection, the power of love, the power of service, and that is considered to be the highest power ever known to the world. Give up your legal power or any physical power; the *Sakti* (potency) is such that it does not care for that.
The respected Asutosh Mukherji was several times wanted by the government to go to England but his mother did not give permission. He therefore told them, "My mother does not allow me to go to any foreign country therefore I cannot go."

There are many examples of a mother controlling her son. Taking the feet dust of the mother, the son feels he can do anything and everything. Affection and love have such power, such value! Therefore Mahaprabhu says, "To give this and that to God is self-deception. Give love. Love of Krsna, *Prema,* is everything; it is all in all. You are spending money and giving your physical energy in so many ways, but love is the real essence of any existence, so offer that to the Lord and through that come to the plane of love that surrounds Him."

God takes the form of Krsna in the plane of love and that is the most fundamental and the most subtle plane behind all this variegated creation. So come to that plane, try to penetrate into that plane where God is Krsna, and where the paraphernalia is Vrndavana. Anyhow try to have admission in that plane and you will find there the happiest form of life.

Mercy is more beautiful than justice. We cannot think of blaming the spirit of justice, but at the same time we cannot deny that there is mercy over justice. But one who can extend mercy over justice must have such power that he is able to give due compensation. The Lord has such power of compensation. Krsna is such an aspect of the Lord. He can give mercy through love and affection, and by any means we want to live in that environment. Mahaprabhu came to show that to be the plane for which we should strive. And Bhaktivinoda Thakur said, "In no time the intelligentsia of the world will come to understand that this is the highest conception of attainment of all humans as well as of everything else in the whole of creation. The intelligentsia cannot be misguided for long by so many other proposals of the highest attainment which are only giving partial achievement. Many things are going on in religion in the name of the highest solution of our life, but what Mahaprabhu has given very soon .will be detected by the intelligentsia of the world, and all will flock to the banner of Sri Chaitanyadeva and will sing the glory of Mahaprabhu and Krsna."

What do you think? Do you think that it is very laudable and tastful? Our Srila Prabhupad began that Mission and Sripad Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaj has actually firmly established and propagated it widely. I am growing old and our generation is almost finished. Now you are all to participate and fully develop what they have begun.